After 1 h, a speckled king snake (*Lampropeltis getulus holbrooki*) approached the nest. Placing its head in the nest, it seemingly detected the nestlings. This pose lasted 1–2 sec. Then, as in a strike, the snake quickly threw its body over the nest preventing escape of the young. The female Dickcissel, now on a shrub at some distance gave several alarm notes. The snake took 1 young from the nest by encoiling and strangling it about the neck and upper body, holding the nestling about 15 cm from the nest while doing so. At the same time the snake swallowed another nestling by pulling it from the nest by its head and then ingesting it head foremost. These activities were photographed without apparent notice by the snake. When the photographer temporarily left the blind for a better view, the snake left the nest. At this point it had completely swallowed the 1 young bird and asphyxiated the other. The 2 remaining young immediately left the nest and the adult female (the adult male was absent during the entire episode) showed intense distraction behavior. She flew near the snake and within 60 cm of the photographer, chirping and falling with both wings down and spread. The snake departed, regurgitating the 1 nestling and leaving the strangled young hanging in the foliage. The female's distraction behavior then subsided and she appeared to lead the surviving young from the nest-site.

On 19 July 1978, a Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoenecius*) nest was found (by CF) on the Konza Prairie Natural Research Area, Geary Co., Kansas. The nest, 70 cm from the ground in a dense growth of *Apocynum sibiricum*, held 4 nestlings (1- to 3-days-old) and 1 egg (later found to be infertile). The nest was still intact on our next visit on the morning of 21 July. Later, at 13:47 of the same day, Facemire saw a speckled king snake at the nest. The snake, about 90 cm long, had one-third of its body supported by the nest, but not covering the nestlings to prevent escape as with the Dickcissel. As nestlings this young could not leave the nest, apparently the snake was not stimulated to pin them down with several body coils. The snake nudged and prodded each young bird with its head, and then began ingesting the smallest nestling head first. The snake returned to the ground before completely swallowing this nestling (which took 3–5 min). (Best [Auk 91:168–169, 1974] noted the same behavior in the blue racer [*Coluber constrictor*].) The snake then left the area. The nest was inspected immediately (by CF) and only 1 chick was missing. The next largest nestling had apparently been "tasted" as the natal down of the head and neck were wet with saliva.

The nest was visited again at 17:50 on 22 July. The eyes of the largest young had opened during the intervening 28 h, but there were no other changes. Next visited at 09:54 on 24 July, the nest was found empty, but otherwise undisturbed and presumably was depredated in our absence.

Pettingill (1976) and Best (1974) both reported nest predation by snakes of the genus *Lampropeltis*, but in addition to this being, as far as we know, the first record of direct observation of a predator at either a Dickcissel or a Red-winged Blackbird nest, it is seemingly the first record of nest predation by the speckled king snake.—CHARLES F. FACEMIRE, *Dept. Fishery and Wildlife Sciences, New Mexico State Univ., Las Cruces, New Mexico 88003* AND STEPHEN D. FRETWELL, *Div. Biology, Kansas State Univ., Manhattan, Kansas 66506.* (Present address CF: *Dept. Ecology, Ethology and Evolution, 515 Morrill Hall, Univ. Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, Illinois 61801.*) *Accepted 29 Mar. 1979.*

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Screech Owl eats fish and salamander in winter.—On 17 February 1978, Rising picked up a freshly dead gray female Screech Owl (*Otus asio*) from along the Pennsylvania Turnpike, at Neffs, Lehigh Co., Pennsylvania. The owl (Royal Ontario Museum No. 130,693)

had in its stomach the precaudal portion of a two-lined salamander (*Eurycea bislineata*) (identified by Schueler, and deposited in the Natl. Mus. Nat. Sci., Ottawa, Canada) as well as vertebrae and other parts of a 5–6 cm fish. The snout-vent length of the salamander was ca. 45 mm. Bent (U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull. 170, 1938) lists "salamanders" (no specific details) as among the foods taken by Screech Owls, although from his reports these constitute, at most, a minor and occasional portion of their diet. In a 30-year study of Screech Owl natural history in northern Ohio, VanCamp and Henny (N. Am. Fauna No. 71, 1975) did not find evidence of feeding on salamanders, though they did find that Screech Owls occasionally ate fish. At the time this owl was killed substantial snow cover extended as far south as southern Maryland and Delaware and had persisted for several weeks.

It had been thought until recently that northern *E. bislineata* hibernated in winter, but Ashton and Ashton (J. Herpt. 12:295–298, 1978) recently found that in southwestern Ohio salamanders remained active in streams until stream temperatures dropped below 7°C, when they moved into subterranean winter retreats where the water was above that temperature. The salamander taken by this owl must have been active at the time of its capture. The juxtaposition of it with fish remains in the owl's stomach suggests that it was in open water (Screech Owls are thought to capture aquatic prey at times, VanCamp and Henny 1975), perhaps near a spring or in a cave.—J. D. RISING, *Dept. Zoology, Univ. Toronto, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1A1 and Dept. Ornithology, Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, Ontario M5S 2C6 Canada* AND F. W. SCHUELER, *Dept. Zoology, Univ. Toronto, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1A1 Canada.* *Accepted 27 Apr. 1979.*

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Marsh Hawks feeding on waterfowl.—We observed 3 instances of Marsh Hawks (*Circus cyaneus hudsonicus*) feeding on waterfowl, 1 in Manitoba in 1972 and 2 at Horicon National Wildlife Refuge, Wisconsin, in 1977. Marsh Hawks were abundant in both areas.

At 09:55 on 25 April 1972, at Marshy Point, Manitoba, Blohm flushed a female or immature Marsh Hawk from the remains of a freshly killed Pintail (*Anas acuta*) hen. The carcass was in a grassy area about 10 m from water. Feathers were strewn about, back muscles had been removed and the breast muscle was partially consumed. The visceral cavity was opened, and portions of the proventriculus had been eaten. Well-developed ovarian follicles indicated that the hen was in good pre-laying condition.

At Horicon, Livezey flushed a Marsh Hawk, either a female or an immature, from the carcass of a Blue-winged Teal (*A. discors*) hen at approximately 11:00 on 13 June 1977. The teal was located in a dense, unmowed alfalfa field where several species of ducks (Blue-winged Teal, Gadwall [*A. strepera*] and Pintail) nested during the season. The breast, viscera and parts of the neck had been removed. The remains consisted of the feet, sternum, head and wings.

Again, at Horicon on 12 October 1977, at 14:45, Van Dyke flushed a female or immature Marsh Hawk from the remains of a crippled Mallard (*A. platyrhynchos*) drake on a mudflat bordering open water and an extensive stand of softstem bulrush (*Scirpus validus*). This duck was an experimental bird in a study of crippling loss at Horicon, and its wing was known to have been broken, rendering the bird flightless. The carcass was decapitated, with the head and neck lying beside the trunk. The heart, esophagus, trachea, most of the liver and small portions of the lungs, neck and breast muscle were eaten. The warmth of the visceral remains, lack of dried blood and moistness of the lungs, eyes and nictitating membranes indicated a very recent death. The duck did not appear to be emaciated at the time of death.