

Wilson Bull., 93(4), 1981, p. 549

Symbiotic interaction between Starlings and deer.—The symbiotic relationship between oxpeckers (*Buphagus* spp.) and large African mammals is well documented (Rice, *Auk* 80:196–197, 1963). A few North American birds have been observed eating ectoparasites on large mammals. Most of these associations involve ungulates and corvids (Dixon, *Condor* 46:204, 1944; Rice and Mockford, *Wilson Bull.* 66:272–273, 1954). A recent note describes interactions between Scrub Jays (*Aphelocoma coerulescens*) and feral hogs (*Sus scrofa*) (Baber and Morris, *Auk* 97:202, 1980). I observed two similar interactions between Starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) and white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) in central Wisconsin where Starlings commonly feed on insects flushed by grazing cattle. Observations were made with a 15 × 60 spotting scope.

On 8 July 1979, at 20:50 CST, I saw an adult female deer walking through a grass-shrub area; an adult Starling was perched on her nose. The bird moved up to the crown of the deer's head, down the neck and back and returned to the head, ostensibly probing for ectoparasites; the deer showed no reaction. The observation lasted 10 min while the deer moved over 200 m and then out of view.

On 16 July 1979, at 09:15 CST, I saw an adult Starling on the head of an adult deer of unknown sex. The deer was on a little-used road which bisected a pastured area interspersed with oak (*Quercus* spp.) woodlots. The deer was visible for only 15 sec before it disappeared into cover and was apparently oblivious to the presence of the Starling. Riney (*Condor* 53:178–185, 1957) noted similar complacency in Scrub Jay-mule deer (*O. hemionus*) interactions. That advanced feeding behavior is extensive in another sturnid, the oxpecker, suggests that family-related learning traits may be developing within local Starling social groups as Baber and Morris (1980) speculated for Florida Scrub Jays.

I wish to thank Raymond K. Anderson for helpful comments on this manuscript.—ROBERT K. MURPHY, *College of Natural Resources, Univ. Wisconsin at Stevens Point, Stevens Point, Wisconsin 54481. Accepted 10 Oct. 1980.*

Wilson Bull., 93(4), 1981, pp. 549–550

Cattle Egrets feeding in association with human workers.—The foraging strategy of Cattle Egrets (*Bubulcus ibis*) in attendance of grazing cattle is well-known. Their association of a commensalistic nature, with domestic and wild ungulates is well-documented (Heatwole, *Anim. Behav.* 13:79–83, 1965; Ali and Ripley, *Handbook of Birds of India and Pakistan*, Vol. 1, 1968; Jenni, *Ecol. Monogr.* 39:245–270, 1969). Cattle Egrets also use human activity to their advantage in so far as following plows, tractors, vehicles, etc. for the purpose of feeding. However, to the best of my knowledge, there are no reports of Cattle Egrets associating with human beings on foot, for food procurement in the field. The present note is a report on such findings.

During the past few years of bird watching, I often visited a large farmland area, part of which is swampy, spanning about 300 ha along the Dabhoi Road, approximately 10 km from Baroda (73°13'E, 22°18'N), Gujrat State, India. This farmland, irrigated with sewage water from the sewage treatment plant of Baroda City Corporation, is the favorite haunt of a large number of migratory and resident birds, including a large population of Cattle Egrets. Much of the area is covered with native grasses harvested for use as cattle fodder. Many laborers make a living nearly year-round manually cutting grass with sickles. Small groups of egrets associate with the laborers, capturing insects flushed during harvesting operations.