

seize floating objects from the surface without entering the water (Skutch, Pacific Coast Avifauna 34:428, 1960). The Rusty-margined Flycatcher (*Myiozetetes cayanensis*) has been known to fly low over the water during rainstorms (Rylander, Wilson Bull. 84:344, 1972), but the flight pattern was parallel to the water surface and swallow-like in nature.

In Surinam, Haverschmidt (Birds of Surinam, Livingston Pub. Co., Wynnewood, Pennsylvania, 1968:311) saw Great Kiskadees (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) taking small fish by diving like a kingfisher, and bathing in the same manner. The Fork-tailed Flycatchers were possibly engaged in bathing, although only minimal preening was noted. My observation was made at mid-afternoon of a hot ($>35^{\circ}\text{C}$) day during the dry season. No breeze was detectable and the water surface was calm. Given the above, the possibility that the birds were attempting to cool themselves cannot be discounted.

My presence in Vichada was funded by the Estación de Biología Tropical Roberto Franco, Villavicencio, Colombia, and the Smithsonian Peace Corps Environmental Program.—WILLIAM W. LAMAR, Dept. Biology, Univ. Texas at Arlington, Arlington, Texas 76019. Accepted 1 Feb. 1983.

Wilson Bull., 95(3), 1983, pp. 489–490

Probable investigator-induced egg drop by a Horned Lark.—Dump nesting, community nests, and egg dropping are widely reported in the literature (Edminster, American Game Birds of Field and Forest: their Habits, Ecology, and Management, Scribner, New York, New York, 1954; Heusmann, J. Wildl. Manage. 36:620–624, 1972; Weeks, Wilson Bull. 92:258–260, 1980). Explanations for these occurrences generally hypothesize a lack of proper timing or a disruption in the nesting cycle such as loss of the nest. Given the opportunity, females of some species will seek a substitute nest after the loss of their own; however, if the laying cycle is at a critical stage the egg may be dropped indiscriminantly. Once an egg follicle reaches a certain point in development reabsorption is no longer possible and laying must take place. Thus, a Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*) which intended to lay in the nest of a conspecific but was suddenly repulsed from the nest box, had to deposit an egg in open water (Clawson et al., J. Wildl. Manage. 43:347–355, 1979).

Horned Larks (*Eremophila alpestris*) are noted for their stealth about nest-sites and their aversion to revealing the location of a nest. Pickwell (Bent, U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull. 179, 1942) termed the manner in which Horned Larks quietly leave a nest well in advance of impending danger as “casual abandonment.” Several investigators have reported the reluctance of brooding females to return to a nest while a threat persists in the vicinity (Sutton, Wilson Bull. 34:131–141, 1927; Garrett, M.S. thesis, Ohio State Univ., Columbus, Ohio, 1948; Beason and Franks, Auk 91:65–74, 1974; Wackenhut, M.S. thesis, West Virginia Univ., Morgantown, West Virginia, 1980).

In late spring of 1979, while studying a population of Horned Larks on reclaimed surface mines in Preston County, West Virginia, an egg drop was observed. On 30 May a female Horned Lark was seen carrying nest material. The bird never approached a nest but a search of the area revealed a freshly scraped depression, possibly the beginning of a nest. Subsequent monitoring indicated no further use of the site although two males and a female were regularly seen in the area. On 4 June an observer was positioned in the vicinity to find what was then assumed would be an active nest. Once the female was located she was watched through binoculars. While openly watching from a distance of 20 m, the observer (KS) saw the bird settle in a 2 m² patch of bare earth and remain stationary for approximately 15 min. When the bird resumed activity the area where she had settled was searched and a freshly laid egg was discovered in the exact position the female had occupied. There was no sign

of nest construction in the area. On 5 June the egg lay in the same place with nothing changed except that a small hole had been poked in the shell. On 11 June an active nest containing three eggs was found within 30 m of the spot where the egg had been dropped. When the nest was rechecked on 13 June all eggs were gone; determination of the nest chronology was not possible. Therefore, it could not be verified that this nest was active when the egg was dropped. However, assuming a nest was completed within a few days of when the female was seen carrying nesting material, this nest would have been active at that time. The clutch would have been complete by about 5 June, and hatching would have occurred about 15 June.

We believe that a normal, undisturbed nest existed in the vicinity of the dropped egg, probably the nest which was located on 11 June. When the egg was dropped, the observer was positioned directly between the female and the nest which was subsequently found. It seems likely that the female was inhibited from approaching even for the purpose of depositing an egg. To our knowledge this is the first reported incidence of a Horned Lark dropping an egg or of any species dropping an egg due to voluntary nest avoidance.

The selective advantage of abnormal egg deposition remains unclear, but given the circumstances here the strategy employed by this Horned Lark seems beneficial. In that predation accounts for such a great loss among ground nesting species (in this study 70% of eggs and nestlings produced was lost to predation) any way of avoiding nest betrayal is likely to be advantageous.—P. B. WACKENHUT, 105 Conneaut Lake Rd., Greenville, Pennsylvania 16125; KENNETH A. STRAIT, 302 Emmans St., Flanders, New Jersey 07836; AND ROBERT C. WHITMORE, Division of Forestry, West Virginia Univ., Morgantown, West Virginia 26506. Accepted 12 Jan. 1983.

Wilson Bull., 95(3), 1983, pp. 490–491

Red-bellied Woodpecker responses to accipiters.—While studying Red-bellied Woodpeckers (*Melanerpes carolinus*) at Archbold Biological Station, 13 km S of Lake Placid, Highlands Co., Florida, I saw three hawk attacks on this species. The first occurred in an open grove of citrus and other exotic trees; the others were in xeric pine-oak woodlands.

At 15:07 on 11 December 1981, I heard a Red-bellied Woodpecker giving "scream" calls. When I approached, I saw an immature Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter striatus*) flying 4–5 m above the ground, claspings the woodpecker's legs in its talons. Three sec later the birds broke contact and the woodpecker flew to the nearest tree. Until their separation the woodpecker screamed continuously. When first heard the calls seemed to originate at ground level, suggesting that the birds were not airborne. MacRoberts and MacRoberts (Ornithol. Monogr. 21, 1976) heard an Acorn Woodpecker (*M. formicivorus*) give "scream" calls continuously when it was caught by a Cooper's Hawk (*A. cooperii*).

A "scream" call is also given by Red-bellied, Red-headed (*M. erythrocephalus*), Pileated (*Dryocopus pileatus*), and Hairy (*Picoides villosus*) woodpeckers, Yellow-shafted Flickers (= Northern Flickers) (*Colaptes auratus*) (Norris and Stamm, Bird-Banding 36:83–88, 1965), and Acorn Woodpeckers (MacRoberts and MacRoberts 1976) when handled during banding. A typical sound spectrograph (Kay Electric Company Sonagraph, wide band-pass filter) of the vocalizations recorded (Sony Cassette-Corder TCM-121) while banding an adult female Red-bellied Woodpecker is shown in Fig. 1. While banding, I was mobbed by Scrub Jays (*Aphelocoma coerulescens*) in apparent response to the "scream" calls, but mobbing behavior was not employed by nearby conspecifics.

On 16 December 1981 at 13:32, a male and female Red-bellied Woodpecker were perched in trees about 25 m apart when I observed a third Red-bellied Woodpecker about 75 m away