

In spite of the published records of the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker in western North Carolina, a great deal remains to be learned about the distribution of the bird in the area. Observers should be alert to document any breeding of the species in the region.

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Blue Jays Mob a Dead Common Grackle

PAUL A. STEWART

203 Mooreland Drive, Oxford, N.C. 27565

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During the morning of 20 February 1972 I heard Blue Jays (*Cyanocitta cristata*) screaming wildly in the small trees on the lawn of my home, and upon looking out the window I saw no cat where the birds were centered; thus, I watched the birds a few minutes and determined the exact spot receiving their greatest attention. After the mobbing behavior had stopped, I went to the spot and found a dead Common Grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula*). The head and tail of the grackle were buried beneath fallen pine leaves so that the exposed part of the dead bird gave little indication that the black object was a dead bird.

There was little reason to doubt that the dead grackle was the object of the Blue Jays' attention. Inasmuch as Blue Jays normally do not mob living grackles, it is noteworthy that these jays mobbed one that was dead and partly buried.

Two Instances of Apparent Sublimation of Sex Drive in Robins

ELOISE F. POTTER

P.O. Box 277, Zebulon, N.C. 27597

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While watching the birds in my yard near Zebulon, Wake County, N.C., for anting and sunbathing behavior during the cool and sunny days following the heavy rainfall associated with the passage of Hurricane Agnes, I noted an adult male Robin (*Turdus migratorius*) repeatedly mounting pine cones, waving his wings to keep his balance, and apparently attempting copulation. The bird alternately mounted several cones in rapid succession and sunbathed for about 30 minutes beginning at 06:30 EST. Following the last observed mounting, he flew to a tree and began singing. Later in the day (24 June 1972) I saw birds of other species sunning, but they did not mount pine cones.

On 25 June the banded adult male Robin that held territory on the east side of our house and had mounted pine cones the previous day attempted to mount his mate, but she was not receptive. On 28 June she was nest building, and on 2 July she was incubating. I saw the pair feeding young out of the nest on 1 August.

I believe that the mounting of pine cones was a sublimation of the male's sex drive. The Robins had lost their nest on 22 June, and apparently the male was ready to begin re-nesting activities before the female was ready for copulation.

About a dozen juvenile Robins no longer dependent upon their parents had flocked by 11 July. Rainfall began about noon on this date and continued off and on until clearing began about 09:30 on 13 July. By 09:50 Robins and several other species of

birds had begun sunbathing, and they continued to do so frequently through the morning of 19 July.

The morning of 15 July the yard was full of juvenile Robins that were bathing in the pools and sunbathing. Between 08:00 and 09:00 several of these birds were chasing each other and bumping windows the way adults do during the mating season. They would interrupt their chases occasionally to mob other juvenile Robins sunning in the driveway. The mobbing behavior appeared to be an extension of the pursuit flights, and there was no attempt to injure the sunbathers. On one occasion several juveniles excitedly mobbed a flattened pine cone in the driveway near a place particularly favored for sunning. One of these birds, distinctive because of its bare forehead and somewhat advanced state of postjuvinal molt, left the group that had just mobbed the flattened pine cone and immediately attempted to mount an open cone that had not been crushed. This same bird continued to mount one cone after another for about 20 minutes. At 10:20 I saw a juvenile Robin, presumably the same bird, repeatedly mounting a pine cone in a distant part of the driveway. Again the mounting of pine cones appeared to be the sublimation of an ill-timed sex drive; however, in the latter instance this behavior, along with the pursuit flights and mobbing activity, might be considered a form of juvenile sex play.

For the next month (20 July through 17 August) I continued to watch the juvenile Robins closely. Although there were several periods of heavy rainfall during these 4 weeks and the birds frequently bathed at the pools, I saw no anting, only one sunning episode, no pursuit flights, no mobbing, and no pine cone mounting by either juvenile or adult Robins.

Adjustments of Blackbirds and Starlings to Shot Injuries

PAUL A. STEWART

Entomology Research Division

Agricultural Research Service, USDA, Oxford, N.C. 27565

At Scotland Neck, N.C., a large roosting congregation of birds was present during each of the recent falls and winters. The congregation contained Starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*), Red-winged Blackbirds (*Agelaius phoeniceus*), and Common Grackles (*Quiscalus quiscula*). Gunmen often visited the roosting site to shoot the birds, and many birds were thus killed and crippled. When spending weekends at or near the roosting site during the falls and winters of 1970-1972, I saw numerous birds making adjustments to physical handicaps, at least some of the handicaps doubtless resulting from shooting.

The most striking adjustments were those made by birds deprived of their flight capabilities. Such birds normally remained in the woods occupied by the roosting congregation or near dense bushes at its edge. When feeding in the adjacent peanut field, they usually remained within 10 m of such escape cover and ran into the woods or bushes upon my approach, much too soon for me to be able to intercept them. Only once when they had foraged out from a less dense portion of the woods was I able to capture one Red-winged Blackbird and two Common Grackles by rushing toward them from within the woods. When in the dense bushes the birds often climbed quickly to the tops of the bushes where they watched their foiled pursuer. One incapacitated Common Grackle steadily climbed up a grapevine all of the way to the top of a tree about 18 m tall, remaining at the top of the tree during the following half hour that I quietly waited.

A short distance from the roosting site, at the barns of the Leland Kitchin Dairy Farm, a few birds were usually present. These birds, mostly Common Grackles, used the food wasted by the cattle and sought refuge from their would-be captors by flying into the nearby privet hedge. Other scattered birds remained all day in the vicinity of the roosting site, feeding on peanuts in the nearby fields or on food placed for other birds in Scotland Neck. The behavior of most of these birds clearly indicated injuries, but the behavior of some seemed normal, suggesting that not all were injured. Probably, though,