

(*Parula americana*): a female was seen entering a nest in western Macon County. Cerulean Warbler (*Dendroica cerulea*): one was observed in Graham County at a location described by LeGrand (Chat 43:20). Blackburnian Warbler (*D. fusca*): common in the Canadian Zone around Richland Balsam. Some appeared paired. Chestnut-sided Warbler (*D. pennsylvanica*): nearly 100 birds were estimated along the parkway on 10 May. A more careful survey might have indicated "abundant" status. Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*): one of two in Graham county carried nest material.

In addition, two Cerulean Warblers (one confirmed visually) were singing within hearing of each other, ¼ mile N of US 64 on Shooting Creek Road, 5 miles W of the Clay-Macon county line. This is the first published occurrence of the Cerulean Warbler in Clay County. The close proximity of the two singing males suggests the colonial behavior observed in the species at other North Carolina sites (see Chat 43:20). The habitat was mature hardwoods on steep slopes at an elevation of 3000 feet.

On four occasions I heard calls that were attributed to Worm-eating Warblers (*Helmitheros vermivorus*), but the birds were not seen. Despite the use of a tape recorder, no Swainson's Warblers (*Limnothlypis swainsonii*) were found in the previously occupied areas near Fontana Village (Harry LeGrand, pers. comm.). The other warbler species present were Black-and-white (*Mniotilta varia*), Yellow (*D. petechia*), Black-throated Green (*D. virens*), Yellow-throated (*D. dominica*), Blackpoll (*D. striata*), Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapillus*), Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*), Kentucky (*Oporornis formosus*), Hooded (*Wilsonia citrina*), and American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*).

Grackles Exhibit Common Defensive Behavior Against an American Alligator

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On 28 April 1979, while conducting field work on Caper's Island, north of Charleston, S.C., I observed an unusual display of aggressive common defense. As I studied a colony of nesting Boat-tailed Grackles on a small island in a brackish impoundment, a large (10-foot) American Alligator approached the colony from the edge of the pond. Although the alligator advanced with only its head above water, two female Boat-tailed Grackles and a male Red-winged Blackbird began mobbing the alligator when it came within 100 feet of the colony. Flying in tight circles above the alligator's head and uttering constant alarm cries, the three birds harassed the intruder for approximately 15 minutes. At times, the female Boat-tailed Grackles came within 2 inches of the alligator's head as though they were attempting to land.

While aggressive defensive behavior is commonly displayed by both individuals and groups of birds against such enemies as mammals, snakes, and other birds, little documentation exists on attacks on alligators (Bent 1958, Pettingill 1970). This seemingly ambitious defense is not unwarranted, however, because the alligator has been known to prey on the eggs and young of the Boat-tailed Grackle, although occurrences are apparently rare (Audubon 1834, Bent 1958).

LITERATURE CITED

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Pettingill, O.S., Jr. 1970. Ornithology in Laboratory and Field. Burgess Publishing Co., Minneapolis, Minn.