

inducing alarm; W. Schleidt (1961, *Z. Tierpsychol* 18: 534) has shown that alarm reactions are even greater to a "goose" model than to a "hawk" model when the goose model is more rarely used. I have one direct observation bearing on this matter. Barred Forest-Falcons (*Micrastur ruficollis*) commonly follow army ants and elicit some scolding but quick returns from small birds, for these forest falcons, although sometimes attacking birds, generally eat insects. In contrast, one Bicolored Hawk that swooped through a group of ant-following birds at Belém, Pará, completely terrified them. Birds hid under logs and froze in dense bushes or the edges of a tidal channel the habitat was tidally flooded woodland or varzea, an edge habitat where this hawk is commoner than within forest); there was not a sound or movement for several minutes after I chased the hawk away. Thus it may be that the hawklike appearance of the kite is enough to scare mobbing birds quickly, especially if it reinforces the image with a quick rush at them.

I appreciate the support of the National Science Foundation (GB-32921) for studies in the Amazon and of the National Geographic Society for studies in northeastern Brazil. Dean Amadon and Eugene Eisenmann suggested useful changes in the manuscript.—EDWIN O. WILLIS, *Instituto de Biologia, UNICAMP, Caixa Postal No. 1170, 13.100 Campinas, São Paulo, Brazil*. Accepted 19 Jun. 75.

Use of gravel by Purple Martins.—On many occasions during April, May, and June 1975, Sam D. Wolfe and I watched Purple Martins (*Progne subis*) alighting on a paved asphalt road within the city of Sherman, Texas, where they gathered and swallowed small bits of gravel and slivers of glass. The site was a relatively quiet street with little traffic. The birds, while on the ground, were quite fearless and approachable. They apparently relished the gravel and repeatedly returned after being disturbed. Both male and female martins engaged in this activity. Several martin houses were nearby.

I have never seen martins display similar behavior elsewhere in the city, although I have watched numerous colonies as part of my martin studies, nor have I been able to find any published reports in the literature of Purple Martins using gravel in such fashion. The martin's fondness for eggshells is well documented, and these may be important mineral resources for the birds. I suggest that small bits of gravel are helpful to Purple Martins, as for many other birds, in digesting hard-shelled insects.—CHARLES R. BROWN, *2601 Turtle Creek Drive, Sherman, Texas 75090*. Accepted 27 Jun. 75.

Nesting Bald Eagles attack researcher.—Because of the large and relatively stable Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) population on Kodiak Island, Alaska, studies on nesting, productivity, and other aspects of the species' life history have been a part of a continuing research program on the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge (Hensel and Troyer 1964, *Condor* 66: 282; Troyer and Hensel 1965, *Auk* 82: 636). One of my duties as wildlife aide during the summers of 1967 and 1968 was climbing into eyries, most of them in large cottonwoods, to band 5- to 7-week-old eaglets and to collect food habits data. I wrote the following account from field notes recorded at the time of the incident.

On 20 July 1968 my approach to the Karluk Weir nest to check for food remains caused both adults to take wing as is usual when disturbed; however, they remained silent and flew rather close. Starting to ascend the tree on previously driven spikes, I was about 2 m off the ground when I felt a blow against my lower back similar to

that one might expect from a moderately swung baseball bat. I looked around expecting to see another employee playing a joke. Having previously climbed unhindered into nearly 60 nests, I found it hard to believe that an eagle was gliding straight toward me. The dark line of the outstretched wings broken only by the white circle of the head approaching so silently and swiftly was mesmerizing. Finally realizing what had happened, I frantically yelled and waved at the last second to avoid another strike. Both adults kept flying very close to me alternating, first one then the other. After quickly descending to the ground, I found my work shirt and T-shirt cleanly torn. Later examination revealed three superficial lacerations on my back. While I was on the ground, an adult perched in the branches directly above me several times. When I climbed the tree to look into the nest a few minutes later, both birds renewed their attacks; but I was not struck again.

The pattern of attack was similar each time. The cottonwood stand was not dense, so the eagles had sufficient room to start a shallow glide about 15 to 20 m away. They flew straight toward me with wings fully extended, and legs trailing against the body as in normal flight. At the instant before striking, they swerved to the side and thrust the talons out simultaneously. The force of the blow received was in sharp contrast to the one reported by Murphy (1962, Auk 79: 712) which lacked "any appreciable force." It is interesting to note that both birds attacked and that they remained silent during the whole encounter, which lasted about 20 min. Twice as I was writing my field notes in a skiff drifting offshore, one of the pair flew silently overhead and then back to the nest area.

On 30 July, 10 days later, I revisited the same nest to band the 7-week-old eaglet. Both adults initially flew close and circled several times. The branches above me were struck once as I climbed the nest tree. After I entered the nest to band the young, the adults circled overhead, then perched nearby without further incident.—TERYL G. GRUBB, *Washington Department of Game, 2524 Boyer Ave. E., Apt. 436, Seattle, Washington 98102*. Accepted 13 May 76. This note was subsidized by the author.

The status of *Sayornis saya yukonensis* Bishop.—*Sayornis saya* (Say's Phoebe) breeds from central Alaska, Yukon, western Mackenzie east to south-central Canada, and southward to Baja California and central Mexico. The A.O.U. (1957) Check-list recognized three races of *S. saya*: *quiescens* of Baja California, *yukonensis* of Alaska and northwestern British Columbia, and *saya* of the remaining part of the species' range.

Sayornis saya was first divided by Bishop (1900) who confined nominate *saya* (type locality: near Pueblo, Colorado) south and east of Alaska and northwestern British Columbia. He named as a race, *yukonensis* (type locality: Glacier, White Pass, Alaska), the populations breeding in the Yukon Valley. Bishop described *yukonensis* as darker and more clearly gray above, less "scorched" below, and as having narrower pale edges on the wing coverts and secondaries than *saya*. The new race was further characterized by Bishop as having a longer tail and a shorter, broader bill than the nominate race. The race *yukonensis* was recognized by the A.O.U. (1945) Check-list Committee who cited Cory and Hellmayr (1927) and Burleigh and Lowery (1940).

The status of *yukonensis* has aroused considerable debate. Rand (1948) and Phillips (in Phillips et al. 1964) questioned the validity of *yukonensis*. Aldrich (in Jewett et al. 1953) recognized *yukonensis* and included Washington and northwestern Oregon within its range, remarking that the breeding specimens from Washington were