



Escape Diving by an American Oystercatcher Chick

Author(s): Floyd E. Hayes and Glen H. Bennett

Source: *Journal of Field Ornithology*, Vol. 56, No. 4 (Autumn, 1985), pp. 415-416

Published by: [Blackwell Publishing](#) on behalf of [Association of Field Ornithologists](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4513064>

Accessed: 26/03/2011 16:16

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/action/showPublisher?publisherCode=af0>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Association of Field Ornithologists and *Blackwell Publishing* are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Journal of Field Ornithology*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

Unusual Prey-stalking Behavior by a Goshawk.—On 8 June 1982 at 0900 I observed a 5-min sequence of an adult Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*) hunting an adult female Blue-winged Teal (*Anas discors*) along Tahosa Creek at 2700 m elevation about 14 km S of Estes Park, Larimer Co., Colorado. I first noticed the Goshawk standing on the ground in a wet meadow adjacent to a pond roughly 20 m in diameter along the small, sand-bottomed creek; the teal was floating in this pond. A narrow row of willows (*Salix* spp.) about 1.5 m high separated the Goshawk from the edge of the pond. The Goshawk stared at the teal through an opening in the brush. The hawk moved its head slightly, but otherwise remained motionless for about a minute. It then crouched down and quickly ran a few steps to another opening where it remained crouched low to the ground and stared at the teal. The Goshawk repeated this sequence 4 or 5 times, moving downstream nearly the length of the pond, in the same direction as the teal, until the hawk neared a large break in the line of willows. After this last stop, the teal took flight in the downstream direction; simultaneously, the Goshawk took two running steps and flew towards the teal, flanking it at an acute angle. The Goshawk narrowly missed the teal, after which it veered off and flew into the adjacent Ponderosa Pine (*Pinus ponderosa*)/Douglas Fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) forest.

I had frequently observed a Goshawk perched on low branches and making swift, low flights through the adjacent forested area during the previous several weeks while I was engaged in a study of chipmunks (*Eutamias* spp.). As many as 6 species of sciurids were abundant in the area, and golden-mantled ground squirrels (*Spermophilus lateralis*), especially, often responded with alarm calling to the Goshawk's low flights.

Forbush (1927:118–123) and Bent (1937:132) relate several anecdotes containing indirect evidence of Goshawks hunting prey, especially rabbits, on foot. However, neither of these nor any recent references on Goshawks I could find document this particular kind of stalking behavior, reminiscent of feline predators. This hunting method was not mentioned in recent intensive studies of Goshawk hunting behavior using radio-telemetry (Kenward et al., 1981, Kenward 1982). *Accipiter cooperi* has been observed stalking small birds on the ground in dense brush (Mengel 1965).

I thank M. A. Holmgren, R. M. Mengel, and D. M. Bird for reviewing the manuscript.

LITERATURE CITED

- BENT, A. C. 1937. Life histories of North American birds of prey. U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull. 67.
 FORBUSH, E. H. 1927. Birds of Massachusetts and other New England states. Vol. 2. Mass. Dept. Agric.
 KENWARD, R. E. 1982. Goshawk hunting behavior and range size as a function of food and habitat availability. *J. Anim. Ecol.* 51:69–80.
 ———, V. MARCSTROM, AND M. KARBLUM. 1981. Goshawk winter ecology in Swedish pheasant habitats. *J. Wildl. Manage.* 45:397–408.
 MENGEL, R. M. 1965. Birds of Kentucky. *Ornithol. Monogr.* No. 3.
 BRADLEY J. BERGSTROM, *Museum of Natural History and Department of Systematics and Ecology, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas 66045.* Received 15 Nov. 1984; accepted 27 June 1985.

Escape Diving by an American Oystercatcher Chick.—On 12 June 1983 we visited several small islets in the Sinepuxent Bay in Worcester County, Maryland. As we beached our canoe, 2 adult American Oystercatchers (*Haematopus palliatus*) began calling loudly while flying erratically over an approximately 5-week-old chick swimming about 5 m from us and the shore. The chick swam rapidly away as we stood on the shore, and when about 15 m from the island it dove out of sight. Due to the rough water we did not see the bird until it reappeared 10–15 s later about 5 m from where it had submerged.

Several accounts of adult shorebirds diving when wounded and approached by humans, or when attacked by aerial predators have been reported in the literature. Sordahl (1982) suggests that diving is an effective escape response because predators concentrate their attention on the point of submergence. In contrast, diving by shorebird chicks has seldom been reported. Newly-hatched chicks are probably unable to dive due to their light weight, fluffy feathers, and small wing area, but as suggested by Sordahl (1982), the tendency to dive should increase with age and ability. Diving by North American shorebird chicks has previously been reported in the Black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*) (Sordahl 1982, Sumner 1931), American Avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*) (Gibson 1971, Sordahl 1982), and Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularia*) (Pettingill 1976). Although Eurasian Oystercatcher (*H. ostralegus*) chicks are known to dive (Coomber 1975, Reva 1973, Simmons 1955), we believe this is the first report for American Oystercatcher chicks.

We thank Tex Sordahl, Claudia Wilds, and an anonymous reviewer for helpful suggestions while preparing this note. David Czaplak provided helpful information. David Wright was also with us at the time of our observation. Ellen Benedicto typed the final manuscript.

LITERATURE CITED

- COOMBER, R. 1975. Contrasting predator-reactions of two Oystercatcher chicks. *Br. Birds* 68:157.
- GIBSON, F. 1971. The breeding biology of the American Avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*) in central Oregon. *Condor* 73:444-454.
- PETTINGILL, O. S., JR. 1976. Observed acts of predation on birds in northern lower Michigan. *Living Bird* 15:33-41.
- REVA, P. P. 1973. In V. E. Flint, ed. *Fauna i Ekologiya Kulikov*. Moscow. 1:90-91.
- SIMMONS, K. E. L. 1955. The nature of the predator-reactions of waders to humans; with special reference to the role of aggressive-, escape- and brooding-drives. *Behaviour* 8:130-173.
- SORDAHL, T. A. 1982. Antipredator behavior of American Avocet and Black-necked Stilt chicks. *J. Field Ornithol.* 53:315-325.
- SUMNER, E. L. 1931. Some observations on bird behavior. *Condor* 33:89-91.
- FLOYD E. HAYES, *Department of Biology, Loma Linda University, Riverside, California 92515* (Current address: *Division of Biological Sciences, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109*), and GLEN H. BENNETT, *Biology Department, Takoma Academy, Takoma Park, Maryland 20912*. Received 1 Nov. 1984; accepted 3 Aug. 1985.

Post-Fledging Distribution of White-crowned Pigeons Banded in St. Croix, Virgin Islands.—Wiley and Wiley (Wildl. Monogr. 64:54 pp. 1979) describe the breeding biology of the White-crowned Pigeon (*Columba leucocephala*) in Puerto Rico with the exception of migration. From 1950 to 1960 Seaman banded 1271 white-crowned chicks at Krause Lagoon, St. Croix, prior to its eventual dredging and development as an industrial complex. Banding recoveries of these chicks provide information on post-fledging and pre-breeding movements. From this effort there are 57 recoveries (4.5%) reported from 1950-1960 (Table 1).

Recoveries ranged as far afield as Puerto Rico to the northwest and Barbuda to the east. Fifty-one percent of the recoveries were reported from St. Croix, 28% from St. Martin, St. Kitts and Barbuda, and 21% from the Puerto Rico Bank (Fig. 1). This suggests a departure toward the east of most birds surviving the breeding season. However, a fairly large movement to the north is evident from recoveries from St. Thomas to Vieques. Fall recoveries away from the natal colony at Krause Lagoon indicate a strong movement to the northern Lesser Antilles (Table 1).

A recovery from St. Martin in May could indicate late migration to the natal colony through the Lesser Antilles or recruitment of Krause Lagoon birds breeding in other locations in the region. A June recovery from Vieques also suggests recruitment to other colonies. The median egg-laying date for initial nesting at Puerto Rico in 1974-1975 was