

Fla. Field Nat. 10(1): 19, 1982.

Adult and immature Bald Eagles talon-clasping while in flight.—On 10 March 1978 at Osteen Bridge, 4 mi E of Sanford on Hwy 415, Seminole County, Florida, I observed an adult Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) soaring at considerable height. Soon after, at much lower altitude, an immature Bald Eagle flew into the area no more than 200 m from where I stood on the bridge and began soaring in the direction of the adult. I noted that the immature was entirely dark brown. The adult then rapidly descended to meet this bird. When the birds were very close together, they turned on their sides and extended their feet towards one another and briefly clasped talons. The engagement was almost immediately broken off only for the eagles to soar around again and then meet each other when the talon-clasping was repeated briefly a second time. The birds disengaged with the immature quickly returning in the direction from whence it had come, while the adult resumed its soaring.

Talon-clasping in eagles is either associated with behavioral dominance when the event is brief or with courtship when the event is prolonged and accompanied by the 2 birds falling through the air in a series of somersaults (Brown and Amadon 1968, Eagles, hawks and falcons of the World, New York, McGraw-Hill Book Co.). Because the immature was all brown and the event was so brief, it is unlikely that the talon-clasping I observed was associated with courtship. In a study of wintering Bald Eagles in north-central Missouri, Griffin (1981, Wilson Bull. 93: 259-264) noted that intraspecific talon-clasping encounters between immatures and adults were relatively uncommon (11% of 27 encounters) whereas immature-immature encounters predominated (85%).—BERNARD KING, *Gull Cry*, 9 Park Road, Newlyn, Penzance, Cornwall, England.

Fla. Field Nat. 10(1): 19-20, 1982.

Diet of Black Skimmers and Royal Terns in northeastern Florida.—Regurgitated prey can provide information on the food habits of some birds without the necessity of sacrificing them. During banding operations on Little Bird Island, Nassau Sound, Duval County, Florida, 270 Black Skimmer (*Rynchops niger*) chicks were confined in a wire corral for banding on 31 July 1977 from 0700-0900. The chicks ranged in age from about 7 days to about 20 days. After the banded chicks were released, the area was searched and all regurgitated items were collected and identified to the lowest possible taxon.

A total of 67 items of 6 species was collected, of which 73.1% represented a single species. In order of abundance they were: striped mullet (*Mugil cephalus*) 49; mummichog (*Fundulus heteroclitus*) 9; Atlantic menhaden (*Brevoortia tyrannus*) 5; a flounder (*Paralichthys* sp.) 2; ladyfish (*Elops saurus*) 1; and sharksucker (*Echeneis naucrates*) 1.

Of the regurgitated fish, some were intact enough to weigh and measure. Twelve mullet averaged 89.3 mm in length (SD 10.7, 69-110) and 8.37 g in weight (SD 2.8, 3.48-14.16); adults are 30-45 cm long or more (Ursian 1977, A guide to the fishes of the temperate Atlantic coast, New York, E. P. Dutton). Seven mummichog averaged 76.6 mm in length (SD 9.8, 64-95) and 7.29 g in weight (SD 3.6, 3.81-14.45); adults are about 9 cm long (Ursin 1977).