

## LITERATURE CITED

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**Red-tailed Hawk drowns Yellow-crowned Night Heron.**—While walking along a dirt road near the San Pablo River in Duval County, Florida at approximately 1645 on 12 July, 1983, I flushed a juvenile Yellow-crowned Night Heron (*Nycticorax violaceus*) from a pool of rainwater. The bird flew around a bend where trees blocked my view. A few seconds later I heard a slapping sound, like a very loud punch, and the squawking of a heron.

When I rounded the bend I saw that an adult Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) had pinned down a juvenile Yellow-crowned Night Heron in a small puddle (1m by 30cm by approximately 10cm deep) which had formed in a tire rut. I suspect that the slapping sound was the hawk hitting the same heron I had previously flushed.

I approached to within 5m of the two birds and remained there for twenty to thirty minutes photographing and watching the birds. The hawk had one foot on the heron's head and the other on its body. The heron occasionally flapped a wing or struggled to which the hawk responded by shifting in a way that appeared to hold the heron's head more firmly under water, and he often looked at the heron as if to see if it was dead yet (Fig. 1). He periodically looked up into a nearby stand of pines where another Red-tailed Hawk was calling. After nearly thirty minutes the heron appeared to be dead, but the hawk remained with it. Leaving the scene, I passed within two meters of the birds, but the hawk made no motion indicative of flying off.



Fig. 1. Red-tailed Hawk holding Yellow-crowned Night Heron under water.

The event, from the time I flushed the heron to the time I left lasted approximately thirty-five minutes. Based on the hawk's responses to the heron's struggles, and his periodic checking of the heron's condition, and on study of my photographs that show that the hawk did not initially have the heron immersed in the water (a fact which I did not notice at the time), I believe that he was intentionally making use of the water to drown the heron. The hawk remained in the water for nearly half an hour keeping the heron's head submerged even though the water was shallow enough for the heron to have otherwise lifted his head out. The method used by this hawk to drown the heron was similar to that reported for the Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*) (Gerig 1979) and the Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*) (Fitzpatrick 1979) in two other cases (both in *Amer. Birds* 33; 836-837).

Thanks to Dr. Robert W. Loftin for editorial comments on an early draft of this note.—Bob Richter, 6656 Diane Rd. Jacksonville, Florida 32211.

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