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**Reaction of Brown-capped Rosy Finches to Banded Nestlings.**—While conducting studies of the Brown-capped Rosy Finch (*Leucosticte australis*) on Mt. Audubon, Boulder Co., Colorado, I observed an unusual behavioral response by a pair of parent birds to aluminum leg bands placed on their 6-day-old offspring.

At 1400 on 31 July 1978, I banded the four nestlings in the brood. Much of the day (1400–1912) the adults were not in attendance, making trips to the nest to feed the young and to remove fecal sacs, although the female usually brooded after a bout of feeding and nest sanitation. Duration of brooding bouts ( $n = 5$ ) was 19–32 min. During the 5 hr of observation the female fed the nestlings 8 times, the male fed them 5 times. The typical routine was for the adult to bring food to the nest rim, call softly, and feed the gaping young, each nestling receiving food several times. The adult then stood on the nest rim and watched the nest contents intently for several seconds. When a nestling backed to the edge of the nest and voided, the adult picked up the fecal sac and carried it off immediately. On 4 occasions (3 by the male, 1 by the female), I saw the adult peer intently into the nest following feeding, put its head down in the nest under the young, and rise up pulling on the leg band of one of the nestlings. Sometimes the adult pulled with great exertion, the nestling's leg being pulled over its head and twisted to its side. One time the adult persisted in pulling on the band for 2 min before it carried off a fecal sac produced by one of the other nestlings. The next day (1 August) during 3 hr of observations (0812–1125) this behavior was not observed, nor was it noted again through fledging of the brood on 9 August.

Similar responses by adults to their recently banded nestlings have been reported by Lovell (*Bird-Banding*, **16**: 144–145, 1945) for Song Sparrows (*Melospiza melodia*), by Berger (*Bird-Banding*, **24**: 19–20, 1953) for Prairie Horned Larks (*Eremophila alpestris*) and by Brackbill (*Bird-Banding*, **25**: 61, 1954) for a Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*). In each of these cases the parents removed one or more of the young from the nest in their efforts to dispose of the bands. When Lovell (op. cit.) removed the bands from his birds the efforts to remove the young from the nest ceased.

Lovell (op. cit.) considered the parents' reaction to the banded nestlings an instinctive attempt to remove feces, shell fragments, or similar materials from the nest. Experiments conducted by Rand (*Auk*, **59**: 404–409, 1942) concur with this hypothesis. Thus it appears that these reactions to bands can be attributed to a generalized nest sanitation instinct. It is interesting to note that, in some cases at least, this instinct supersedes the actual welfare of the nestlings.

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**Clapper Rail Kills Birds in a Net.**—On 29 August 1975, we observed a Clapper Rail (*Rallus longirostris*) attack a Willow Flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii*) hanging in a mist net at the Island Beach State Park Bird Banding Station, Ocean Co., New Jersey. The flycatcher was about 1 m off the ground. The rail jumped up, flapping its wings, and pecked at the flycatcher at least three times before it was frightened off by our approach. The flycatcher died within a few minutes. An immature Gray Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*) found dead in the same net 15 min earlier was presumably killed by the rail because it showed similar wounds on the head and neck.

Bent (1926) and Oney (1954) report a wide variety of food items for both Clapper and King rails (*R. elegans*). Meanley (1956, 1969) found feathers and vertebrae of a female

Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) in the gizzards of King Rails, but no mention is made of how these may have been obtained. European Water Rails (*R. aquaticus*) kill small birds (Axell, 1962; Blundell, 1962; Thompson, 1962), and our observation demonstrates that the Clapper Rail may be similarly opportunistic.

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 JEFFREY A. SPENDELOW, *Peabody Museum of Natural History, Yale University, New Haven, CT 06520*, and HOWARD R. SPENDELOW, JR., *Braddock's Mill Lake, RD 2, Marlton, NJ 08053*. Received 20 April 1979, accepted 26 September 1979.

**Return Rates among Highland Rufous-collared Sparrows.**—During a study on vocal dialects in the Rufous-collared sparrow (*Zonotrichia capensis*) in northwestern Argentina in 1972–1974 (Handford and Nottebohm, *Evolution*, **30**: 802–817, 1976), a banding program was conducted to investigate site fidelity between two adjacent song dialect areas. Given the paucity of information in the literature on return rates, these results should be valuable.

The birds were banded in the 1972–1973 season in two localities 4 km apart at 2,800 and 2,980 m (Table 1). Banding commenced after clear signs of pair-formation to ensure that only resident birds were marked. The 199 birds captured during the first season were each given a numbered aluminum band and an individual combination of colored

TABLE 1.  
Returns of Rufous-collared Sparrows in Argentina.

Site of banding	Number banded 1972–1973	Number returned 1973–1974			Percent return rate
		Recaptured	Resighted	Total	
2,800 m					
Adults ♂	58	7	6	13	22.4
Adult ♀	31	10	4	14	45.2
Juvenile	15	1	5	6	40.0
Total	104	18	15	33	31.7
2,980 m					
Adult ♂	55	8	9	17	30.9
Adult ♀	34	3	4	7	20.6
Juvenile	6	0	2	2	33.3
Total	95	11	15	26	27.4
Grand total	199	29	30	59	29.7