

Western Meadowlark attacks ground squirrel.—While driving along a county road just south of the Cache la Poudre River, three miles west and one mile north of Greeley, Weld County, Colorado, on May 14th, 1951, I saw a Western Meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*) fluttering up and down a short distance away. Closer observation revealed that the bird was attacking a thirteen-lined ground squirrel (*Citellus tridecemlineatus*). The bird was hovering over the ground squirrel and repeatedly striking at it as it ran through the grass. The outcome was not learned as the two animals passed from view over a ridge with the meadowlark still in close pursuit.

This seems noteworthy to me since I had not previously seen a meadowlark attack any mammal. I suppose that the ground squirrel had molested or had been near the bird's nest.—CLARENCE A. SOOTER, 5311 West 55th Street, Mission, Kansas, September 27, 1951.

Harrying of herons by gulls—a further note.—Imhof (1950. *Wilson Bulletin*, 62:210) reported the chasing of a Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) by a Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*), and in view of his notes I (1951. *Wilson Bulletin*, 63:110) reported the chasing of a European Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*) by a European Common Gull (*Larus canus*). Since then I have read a comment by Stacey (circa 1947. "This Wild Company." Edmund Ward, Leicester, England, p. 52) on the chasing of the Grey Heron by the Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*). Since the reference may not be readily accessible to my American readers, I quote:

"Over the Norfolk marshes I have seen how the black-headed gulls will follow and chivvy any heron which flies over their breeding-ground, yet the bittern (according to my limited observations on this bird), so very much like the heron in flight, is tolerated and not interfered with at all. Should a heron happen to cross a field where the peewits nest, the plovers will make the air scream with their frantic attacks until the imagined danger has passed. Why birds should so resent this harmless grey creature I do not know, but perhaps, like all big people, he is good-natured and does not mind."

All three authors express surprise at this persecution of the heron. Note also that Stacey twice comments that it happens when the heron flies *over the breeding grounds* of the other species.

Pereyra (1938. *Aves de la zona ribereña nordeste de la provincia de Buenos Aires* [Birds of the northeast riverside zone of the province of Buenos Aires]. *Memoirs Zool. Gardens La Plata*, Govt. Print. Office of La Plata, p. 46) speaking of the Black-headed Teal, *Heteronetta atricapilla* (Merrem) says: "This queer duck never makes a nest but lays its eggs in the nests of various species of aquatic birds of a variety of families and orders, for it not only parasitizes other ducks but also coots or gallinules, herons, ibises, and gulls; . . . The strangest is to see them in the nests of white herons or egrets, and I once had the opportunity of seeing a newly hatched duckling in such a nest. It very promptly withdrew to the water, and swimming vigorously attempted to put some distance between itself and the danger, possibly because it might fall victim to those same herons which might either eat it or feed it to their own young."

Witherby, *et al.* (1945 [reprint of vol. 3, 1939]. "The Handbook of British Birds." H. F. and G. Witherby, Ltd., London) discuss the food of various herons, and note that a variety of small birds and young of larger birds have been eaten. The prey includes domestic chickens, terns, and Great Crested Grebes. There is therefore no reason to doubt that the young of the lapwing and of gulls would be eaten if opportunity occurred. The behavior of the adults of these species may therefore be not entirely irrational. Most