Roof-nesting, like the use of other man-made structures on Great Gull Island, demonstrates the adaptability of Common Terns in their choice of nest sites. It will be interesting to see whether the use of roofs for nesting continues and increases in future seasons.

I am grateful to Helen Hays and to Kenneth C. Parkes for their comments on the manuscript.

This note is contribution No. 42 from the Great Gull Island Project.—ANNE E. MACFARLANE, *325 E. 72nd St., New York 10021.* *Accepted 20 April 1976.*

Rapid chick separation in Whip-poor-wills.—This note describes a poorly known aspect of Whip-poor-will (*Caprimulgus vociferus*) behavior and emphasizes the possible importance of nestling behavior to survival.

While hiking through second-growth deciduous forest in Jasper County, Illinois, on 5 May 1972, I flushed a female adult Whip-poor-will from 2 eggs resting in a shallow leafy depression. The nest site, "nest," and eggs were typical of published descriptions for the species. During the next 13 days I visited the site 5 times and always found the female incubating at precisely the same location with the eggs slightly rearranged within the nest. On 22 May (4 days from the last visit) the female allowed me to approach to 1 m before flushing. As she flushed, 2 chicks simultaneously separated in opposite directions to a distance of about 15 cm from each other. Their separation occurred so rapidly and unexpectedly to me that I am uncertain whether the chicks were flipped apart by the female with her feet as she flushed, or whether they separated under their own power. I noted no discrete hops. That one chick rather forcefully tumbled forward to rest, left me with the immediate impression that it had been propelled. The chicks remained perfectly motionless, and their eyes remained closed during several minutes of observation.

Two days later, as the female flushed, the chicks separated about 40 cm from each other by a series of rapid but perceptible hops. They moved in exactly opposite directions as before. I was impressed again by the rapidity of their separation, by their motionlessness after a simultaneous and quick stop, and by the effectiveness of their camouflage. The chicks' eyes were first noted to be open on 27 May when the chicks hopped apart about 65 cm along perpendicular paths as the female flushed.

On 31 May only 1 chick hopped from the nest (to about 60 cm). The second chick "froze" within the nest. On this visit I saw the male adult and droppings around the nest for the first time. The male appeared at the moment of typical distraction behavior by the female (sharp "thurp" calls; posturing with dropped wings, fanned tail and erect head; injury-feigning skirmishes through the leaves).

The original nest site was abandoned on 2 June and was littered with droppings. I unexpectedly flushed the brooding *male* about 8 m away, but was looking in the wrong direction to observe the chicks directly as he flushed. They rested about 1 m apart and faced in opposite directions. The male exhibited distraction behavior similar to that of the female. The male was brooding at this same site on 4 June, but neither chick moved when he flushed.

On 6 June the male was brooding the chicks about 15 m from the original nest site. All 3 flushed together. The chicks each flew in straight lines about 45° from one another to a distance of about 12 m. One chick landed in a branch 2 m up, and the other landed on the forest floor. The male immediately placed himself between me and

the chick on the branch and exhibited distraction behavior. The female did not appear. Neither adult nor chicks could be found in the vicinity the following day.

There are 4 references to possible rapid chick separation in Whip-poor-wills in the literature (Bent, U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull, 176, 1940; Fowle and Fowle, Can. Field-Nat. 68:37, 1954; Raynor, Bird-Banding 12:98–104, 1941; Tuttle, Bird-Lore 13:235–238, 1911), but the behavior is described nowhere in detail nor interpreted. The adaptive advantage of rapid chick separation is undoubtedly the increased probability that at least 1 of the chicks will survive nest disruption by a predator. I believe rapid chick separation is one more element of an anti-predator repertoire of adaptations in Whip-poor-wills which includes, in addition, cryptic coloration, brood site movement, and adult distraction behavior.—Eric L. Dyer, *Station 17, Vanderbilt Univ. Hospital, Nashville, TN 37232.* *Accepted 30 July 1976.*

An intraspecific mortal attack.—On the morning of January 6, 1976, I was looking out my window as 2 female House Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) dove (hurtled) into the grass nearby. One held the other by the neck and after a few seconds the struggling victim lay still. The attacking sparrow, still on top of the nearly lifeless one, began to strike hammering blows with its bill on the head of the victim. Several sparrows flew near, and all flew off leaving the motionless body on the ground. Minutes later a House Sparrow returned, jumped on the dead sparrow and again struck it on the head several times, then flew away.

On 8 January I observed a similar incident involving female House Sparrows. The attacking sparrow held the neck of the struggling one, which eventually got loose. Both flew off, one pursuing the other.—Vera Lee Grubbs, *3816 Elmer Lane, Shreveport, LA. 71109* *Accepted 1 Mar. 1976.*

Rufous-sided Towhees mimicking Carolina Wren and Field Sparrow.—Eastern populations of the Rufous-sided Towhee (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*) do not exhibit any marked local dialects, and the high percentage of unique song patterns in the songs of a local population suggests that what a bird hears when it is developing its song does not play an important role in determining the song patterns developed (Borror, Condor 77:183–195, 1975). It is thus of considerable interest to encounter eastern towhees whose songs (or song parts) are excellent mimics of other species. This paper is a report on the songs of 2 towhees (of several hundred I have recorded), one using an introduction consisting of Carolina Wren song phrases, and the other singing Field Sparrow songs. Both birds were seen when recorded.

Mimicry of Carolina Wren.—On 27 July 1975 I recorded a towhee near Murray, Kentucky (OSU recording No. 13679, with 67 songs), some of whose songs had an introduction consisting of (or containing) from 1 to 3 song phrases of a Carolina Wren (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*). The recording contained 5 different song patterns, 4 of which are shown in Fig. 1 (*A*, *B*, *E*, *F*); 2 (*A* and *E*) were normal songs for this population (a 2-note introduction followed by a trill) but 2 of the other 3 had Carolina Wren phrases in the introduction (*B* and *F* in Fig. 1), and a 5th contained only 2 Carolina Wren phrases (of the type in *F*, without the buzzy note and final trill). Most of the songs of the *B* pattern were sung in alternation with songs of the *A* pattern, while most songs of the *F* pattern were sung consecutively, only occasionally alternating with