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An apparent instance of communal nesting by American Oystercatchers.—Communal nesting, as defined by Van Tyne and Berger (Fundamentals of Ornithology, John Wiley and Sons, New York, New York, 1976), is known from a few species in widely divergent orders. I observed a communal American Oystercatcher (*Haematopus palliatus*) nest on the Laguna Madre that represents the first published record of communal nesting for the species.

On 4 June 1977 I found an American Oystercatcher nest on Dimmit Point Island, located at the junction of the Laguna Madre and Corpus Christi Bay, Nueces Co., Texas. The nest, situated atop a shell embankment 1 m high, and on the periphery of a Black Skimmer (*Rynchops niger*) colony, contained six eggs. Four adult oystercatchers flew near me, calling, while I photographed the nest.

The following morning I again visited the island and concealed myself in salt cedar (*Tamarix* sp.) bush 400–600 m from the nest. During the course of the morning, all four oystercatchers remained in the vicinity of the nest, rarely straying more than 100 m away. Three of the oystercatchers entered the nest and sat on or turned the eggs, although none remained in the nest for more than 10 min. The eggs hatched sometime during the following week, for on 15 June I briefly observed four young on the island in the vicinity of the nest. When my presence was detected, the young hid in low vegetation and three adults flew around me calling.

According to Bent (U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull. 142, 1929: 307), the normal clutch-size for American Oystercatchers is three eggs. However, Bent mentions that clutches of five and six eggs have been found. This apparent instance of communal nesting is exceptional among 21 other American Oystercatcher nests that I have located along the Texas coast since 1973, each being an isolated nest with a two- to three-egg clutch.—BRIAN R. CHAPMAN, *Dept. Biology, Corpus Christi State Univ., Corpus Christi, Texas 78412. Accepted 10 Feb. 1982.*

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Song Sparrow pair raise four broods in one year.—Temperate zone passerines are often double-brooded (e.g., Bryant, J. Anim. Ecol. 48:655, 1979) and occasionally raise up to three broods per year (e.g., Snow, A Study of Blackbirds, George Allen and Unwin, London, England, 1958). Cases where four broods are raised, however, are extremely rare, although there are records of three broods being raised and a fourth clutch being unsuccessful (Weaver, Auk 60:62, 1943; Seel, Ibis 110:129, 1968). I report here such a case for the Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*).

Song Sparrow breeding was studied on Mandarte Island, British Columbia, Canada, from 1975–1979 (Smith, Condor 83:152, 1981) and in 1981, when 20 pairs bred on the 6.3-ha island. All breeding adults were color-banded and almost all young were color-banded as nestlings about 6 days after hatching.

One pair of experienced birds, a 3-year-old female and a 7-year-old male, raised four broods in 1981. Clutches of three, four, four, and three eggs were begun on 18 March, 16 April, 14 May, and 14 June, respectively. The final clutch also contained two Brown-headed Cowbird

(*Molothrus ater*) eggs. The first clutch was the earliest ever recorded for this population (Tompa, Ann. Zool. Fenn. 3:3-73, 1964; Smith et al., *Oecologia* 47:164, 1980).

A simple model of the temporal spacing of Song Sparrow broods (Smith and Roff, Can. J. Zool. 58:1007, 1980) shows that a brood-size of one is the only one that will allow Song Sparrows sufficient time to raise four broods, except in an unusually long breeding season. This was precisely the situation for this pair. Only a single sparrow-young reached banding age in each of the first three broods. Because the parents had previously bred together this may have allowed broods to be more closely spaced in time (Smith and Roff, 1980). The final nesting attempt of the pair raised both cowbirds and two of the Song Sparrows to banding age. In all, the four nests fledged at least five Song Sparrows and one cowbird (as judged from begging calls of fledged young), and at least two of the young sparrows reached independence from parental feeding. Thus, the pair were able to compensate for the extreme brood reduction in their first three nests and still have a moderately successful breeding season.

No other pair raised four broods of young in a single year during 6 years of intensive study. Nice (Trans. Linn. Soc. New York 4:93, 1937) cited a report of a single case where a pair of Song Sparrows raised four broods in Ohio. This pair also began the four broods at intervals of about 4 weeks, but began to breed almost 6 weeks later than the case reported here. I doubt if attempting to raise four broods constitutes a breeding "strategy" in the Song Sparrow or other temperate zone passerines. Rather, it is a consequence of having three small broods at the start of the breeding season.

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Post-copulatory display in the Lark Bunting and other species.—In the summer of 1964, Lark Buntings (*Calamospiza melanocorys*) unexpectedly nested in large numbers in southern Saskatchewan and other regions remote from their usual range (e.g., southwestern Minnesota; Anderson and Getman, *Loon* 37:63-69, 1965). (For a good description of the habitat used by buntings in the Regina area see Smith and Smith, *Blue Jay* 24:129-131, 1966.)

Having been intrigued by a post-copulatory display in the male Yellow-headed Blackbird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*) in response to a female dummy of the same species in precopulatory pose (Nero, *Wilson Bull.* 75:391-394, 1963) I set out to test for this behavior in the Lark Bunting. Tests involving the use of a dummy female Lark Bunting placed on the ground in precopulatory or soliciting pose were carried out at several sites from 24-26 June, and 1 and 8 July 1964. The female dummy was arranged in typical passerine soliciting posture, i.e., head drawn back with bill up and open, tail closed and raised, wings partly out, and body low on the tarsi (see Fig. 1).

No attempt was made to quantify the results: I simply wanted to observe and photograph the results of the tests. The most striking response consisted of a post-copulatory display by the male during which it assumed a static exaggerated version of female passerine precopulatory posture (Figs. 1, 2). Nearly identical displays were given by approximately 20 individual males in response to the same dummy.

The dummy female was first placed in the territory of a male, about 4 m from a nest which