

was built in a side branch of Mexican ash (*Fraxinus berlandieriana*), far from the trunk, and ~18 m above the ground. A lack of climbing gear did not allow me to examine the next, but I saw the tail, the yellow lores, and the eye of the incubating bird on 12 and 13 April. A second hawk was observed perching on the top of the same tree, or soaring and calling in the vicinity. On some occasions both birds were seen on the wing over that nest. This nest was last visited on 25 April, and one bird was still on the nest, presumably incubating. Interestingly, an adult Red-shouldered Hawk was seen at a nest ~1 km downstream from Salineño, Starr County, on 20 February 2005 by S. G. Monk (reported to T. Brush). This report may be the same pair if not indeed the same nest.

Thus, the Red-shouldered Hawk still nests in the Lower Rio Grande Valley albeit in insignificant numbers.

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BLUE JAY ATTACKS AND CONSUMES CEDAR WAXWING

Daniel Saenz¹ and Joshua B. Pierce

*Southern Research Station, U.S. Forest Service, 506 Hayter Street,
Nacogdoches, TX 75965–3556*

Blue Jays (*Cyanocitta cristata*) are known to be common predators on bird nests (Wilcove 1985, Picman and Schriml 1994). In addition to predation on eggs and nestlings, Blue Jays occasionally prey on fledgling and adult birds (Johnson and Johnson 1976, Duboway 1985). A majority of reports involve predation on House Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) and other small birds (Chase 1899, Lamore 1958, Master 1979, Cink 1980, Atkins 1991).

On 8 April 2009 at approximately 1830 h CST in a residential neighborhood in Nacogdoches, Texas, we observed a Blue Jay on the ground, pinning a smaller bird beneath its feet. The Blue Jay violently pecked at the smaller bird which was flapping its wings. At this point we could not identify the prey, so we decided to flush the Blue Jay. We discovered it had attacked an adult Cedar Waxwing (*Bombycilla cedrorum*). Upon inspection, the waxwing laid motionless with significant wounds to its head. We then moved approximately 15 m away from the waxwing, and the Blue Jay immediately returned from a nearby perch and began to attack again. It became apparent that the waxwing was not dead when it resumed flapping its wings as the Blue Jay repeatedly struck its head. Soon

afterwards, a passing car appeared to startle the jay, at which time, the jay picked up the waxwing with its beak and laboriously flew approximately 15 m, gaining approximately 3 to 4 m of altitude, before dropping the bird to the ground. We then left the area for 20 min.

Upon returning, we found the jay in the same place where it had dropped the waxwing. Our presence apparently startled the Blue Jay, and it once again carried the waxwing in its beak for about 20 m where it landed on the ground in some brush. We watched for a few minutes and could see the jay pulling off flesh with its beak and consuming the dead bird. Again, we decided to flush the jay so we could inspect the waxwing. The jay retreated to a perch approximately 25 m from the waxwing and watched us as we examined the carcass. The Blue Jay had almost completely removed, and presumably consumed, the head of the waxwing while the body appeared to be completely unharmed. We then returned the waxwing to its previous position on the ground and walked away. We had moved little more than 10 m from the dead bird when the jay darted in and picked up the

¹E-mail: dsaenz@fs.fed.us

waxwing with its beak and flew approximately 10 m into some shrubs. At this point, we decided to no longer disturb the Blue Jay and left the area.

Cedar Waxwings are prey to several species of birds (Meyerriecks 1957, Fisk 1970, Ritchison 1983, Kennedy and Johnson 1986, Sodhi 1992) and may be killed in aggressive interactions with other birds such as the Northern Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*) (Hedrick and Woody 1983). Several factors may increase the susceptibility of Cedar Waxwings to predation from birds that may not normally prey on them. For example, waxwings frequently collide with windows and other objects often causing injury or death (Shaw and Culbertson 1944, Klem 1989), making them easy prey for a variety of birds and mammals. Also, Cedar Waxwings are frequently reported to have fermented-fruit intoxication. Birds affected by naturally occurring fermentation products are reported to appear disoriented and have difficulty flying (Fitzgerald et al. 1990). This intoxication may make them more susceptible to predation (McClure 1962).

We did not witness the initial attack by the Blue Jay; thus, we do not know how it transpired. When we initially noticed the attack, the birds were already on the ground and the jay was in a dominant position over the waxwing. We do not know if the waxwing was healthy or injured prior to the attack by the jay. This account represents the first reported account of a Blue Jay attacking and consuming an adult Cedar Waxwing.

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¹Email: rtelfair@nctv.com

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