

OBSERVATION ON A BLUE JAY
(*Cyanocitta cristata*) ATTEMPTING TO
CAPTURE A ROUGH GREEN SNAKE
(*Opheodrys aestivus*)

Dr. Eugene B. Sledge

Early one afternoon during the first week of August, 1964, I was attracted by a commotion overhead in a water oak tree. The sounds indicated that something was vigorously thrashing about in the leafy branches. I saw a Blue Jay struggling with a Rough Green Snake. The jay was attempting to balance himself on one leg with the aid of his wings, and hold the snake against the limb with his other foot and his beak. The snake was struggling vigorously, and quickly escaped. It fell to the ground near me and the jay immediately flew to a nearby tree and did not return. I caught the snake as it began to crawl rapidly away.

The snake was approximately twenty-four inches long. About midway along the body there were marks made by the jay's beak on the ventral scutes. These marks, in the form of a dark blue-colored V on the yellow ventral surface of the snake, apparently resulted from pressure exerted by the bird's beak. There was also some blue discoloration of the normal green on the reptile's dorsal surface opposite the aforementioned marks, but there was no distinct imprint of the jay's beak. There was no other apparent injury to the snake. I kept it two or more days but observed no apparent adverse effects from its encounter with the jay. The snake was then released.

It has been well established that the Blue Jay partakes of a wide variety of animal food. Bent (Life Histories of North American Jays and Titmice. Part 1, p. 39. Dover Publications, Inc. New York. 1964) states that the small vertebrates eaten by the Blue Jay may consist of fish, salamanders, tree frogs, mice and birds. Imhof (Alabama Birds, p. 372. State of Alabama Department of Conservation, Game and Fish Division, by University of Alabama Press. 1962) gives the same vertebrates as possible prey for this bird. However, neither of these authors include snakes in the known diet of the Blue Jay.

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MINUTES OF WINTER MEETING
ALABAMA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
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The regular winter meeting of the Alabama Ornithological Society was held at the College Inn Motel on Highway 5, Marion, Alabama, on February 1-2, 1969. Approximately fifty-two members and guests were present.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING

The Executive Council met at 11:30 A.M. for a combined lunch and business session in the College Inn Motel dining room. The following officers and directors were present: Helen Kittinger, President; Clara Caffey, Vice President; Sybil Hanks, Treasurer; Idalene F. Snead, Secretary; Dr. Julian L. Dusi, Editor of Alabama Birdlife; Dr. Eugene B. Sledge, Editor of Newsletter; Tom A. Imhof, Director of State-at-Large; Fairley Chandler, Gulf Coast Region; James A. Keeler and Bob Skinner, Coastal Plains Region; Rosemary T. Dusi, Piedmont and Eastern Mountains Region; Dr. Dan C. Holliman, Central Mountain Region. Others present were: Bernice Smalley, Robert R. Reid, and Robert W. Skinner.

The minutes of the Executive Council meeting of November 8, 1968, were read by the Secretary and after being corrected were approved.

The Treasurer's report, stating that a balance of \$635.71 was in the checking account as of February 1, 1969, was read. The report was approved.

Sybil Hanks also read a letter of resignation from Miss Florence Ballard. The Council decided not to accept Miss Ballard's resignation but to give her an honorary membership.

Dr. Sledge reported that the Newsletter in the fall had been late because of unforeseen circumstances, but that the January issue was on time.

Dr. Dusi reported that Alabama Birdlife is a little behind schedule but will be sent out shortly.

There was a brief discussion of trying to change the present law regarding hawk protection so that it would be more specific as to the species included. Mr. Keeler and Mr. Reid thought we should get a definite sponsor, some active, conservation-minded legislator to present the bill. Mr. Reid also suggested that we all contact our own legislators, especially if we know them personally.

The President appointed the nominating committee: Clara Caffey, Mr. Robert R. Reid, and Dr. Dan C. Holliman.

A motion was presented and passed that a resolution in memory of Mr. and Mrs. H. Sevem Regar be recorded in the Alabama Ornithological Society's minutes, and a copy be sent to Mrs. Morton Kleban of Starkville, Mississippi. Likewise, a motion was made and passed that a resolution in memory of Dr. D. O. Wright be recorded in the Alabama Ornithological Society's minutes, and a copy be sent to Mrs. Harriet H. Wright.

Fairly Chandler reported that the activities and field trips have been generally informal in the Gulf Coastal Region, and that there is a possibility of their group's combining with the Mobile group a little later. He also told us of Mr. Francis M. Weston's illness.

Mr. Jim Keeler reported that the Bureau of Sports, Fisheries, and Wildlife wanted to know the status of the Red-cockaded Woodpecker in Alabama, in order that it might be placed on the rare and endangered species list if the situation warranted it. Mr. Keeler replied that this species was becoming more scarce since there are fewer mature pine