

COMMENSAL FORAGING BY A RED-SHOULDERED HAWK (*BUTEO LINEATUS*) WITH WILD TURKEYS  
(*MELEAGRIS GALLOPAVO*)

On 6 August 2003, I observed an instance of commensal foraging by a Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*) with Wild Turkeys (*Meleagris gallopavo*). I began watching a flock of 15 adult turkeys at 0745 H from a distance of 250 m (through 10 × 40 binoculars) as they foraged in a weedy, grazed pasture bordered by an oak-hickory (*Quercus-Carya*) woodlot near the mouth of Crooked Creek on the White River, Marion County, Arkansas (36°13.6'N, 92°28'W). At 0900 H a juvenile Red-shouldered Hawk flew across the pasture toward the turkeys and perched on a low branch at the forest edge. As the hawk approached, the turkeys cackled and ran into the forest but all emerged from cover within 1–2 min and resumed feeding in the pasture some 5–15 m from the forest edge. Over the next 90 min, the hawk followed the turkeys as they meandered 225 m southward along the ecotone. On five occasions the hawk dropped to the ground from a low perch (2–4 m above ground) at the edge of the woodlot to capture small prey items with its talons. After consuming the prey on the ground, the hawk would walk a few steps, pause, and then fly to another perch within 5–8 m of the leading front of the turkey flock. The turkeys showed little reaction to the hawk except for one hen, which feigned a lunge toward the hawk on the ground from ca. 5 m away. The observations ended when the turkeys and hawk moved out of sight around a bend of the woodlot.

About an hour later, I followed the path of the turkeys and found grasshoppers (primarily *Syrbula admirabilis*, *Arphia simplex*, *Cortophaga viridifasciata*, *Hippiscus ocelote*, and *Dissosteira carolina*) to be fairly abundant in the pasture. It seems probable that the hawk was feeding on grasshoppers flushed by the turkeys. This observation appears to be the first report of commensal foraging by the Red-shouldered Hawk (Crocoll 1994, *In* A. Poole and F. Gill [Eds.], *The birds of North America*, No. 107. The Academy of Natural Sciences and American Ornithologists' Union, Washington, DC U.S.A.). I thank Bill Pranty, Michael McCrary, and Jerry Mastel for comments on the manuscript and Bob Yeider for hospitality on the White River.—Gary R. Graves (e-mail address: [graves.gary@nsmnh.si.edu](mailto:graves.gary@nsmnh.si.edu)), Department of Zoology, MRC-116, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, P.O. Box 37012, Washington, DC 20013 U.S.A.

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