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## Adult Bald Eagle Killed by Another Eagle

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**Adult Bald Eagle killed by another eagle.**—At about 0730 on 19 December 1983, Assistant Park Manager Greg Toppin observed an adult Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) lying on its side next to the main drive within Jonathan Dickinson State Park, Martin County, Florida. Another adult Bald Eagle was standing on top of it, and a third adult was perched in a nearby tree. As Toppin approached to get a closer look, he observed that the eagle was tearing feathers from the head of the bird on the ground. The bird on top then flew off and an examination found that the bird on the ground was freshly dead. It had a large flesh wound along one side of the head and blood and feathers were scattered around the body. A careful inspection of the site revealed no marks to indicate that the dead eagle might have been struck by a vehicle and no road kills were found that might have attracted it to this location.

The bird was transported to Lake Worth for a preliminary examination by Greg Harrison, a veterinarian experienced with birds of prey. Dr. Harrison found the bird to be an adult female in excellent condition with multiple chest wounds, which could have been caused by talons, severe damage to the head, and wounds along the neck. An x-ray showed that the skull was fractured, but no other bones broken. There was no evidence that the bird had been shot.

The carcass was then shipped to the National Wildlife Laboratory in Madison, Wisconsin, where it underwent more thorough examination. This detailed necropsy concluded that death was due to trauma, wounds received from other eagles. Multiple puncture wounds were found on the upper breast. The breast and abdomen had been denuded of feathers. The head had large puncture wounds at the ramus of the temporal mandibular joint. The left occipital area also had a large puncture wound, and there were multiple hemorrhagic spots and puncture wounds along the back of the neck. The left posterior and superior portion of the head was also denuded of feathers. Internal examination disclosed no significant damage to the cardiovascular and respiratory systems. The largest ovarian follicle measured about 10 cm in diameter.

As the dead bird was found approximately two and a half kilometers from an active bald eagle nest within the park, there was concern that it might be

one of the adults using this nest and that there might be eggs remaining in the nest. (The preceding year two eagles were raised at this location.) In that two adult eagles were observed later in the day near this nest, it was concluded that the dead bird may have intruded into their territory. Perhaps this triggered the confrontation and an aerial battle between two or three eagles in which one bird was killed either by the other bird(s) or by a fall to the ground. Although aggressive behavior between adult eagles is seen rather frequently, this is the only Florida record I know of in which an aggressive encounter apparently resulted in the death of one of the individuals involved.

I thank Fred Lohrer for his helpful comments on an earlier draft of this note.—Richard E. Roberts, Division of Recreation and Parks, Department of Natural Resources, P. O. Box 8, Hobe Sound, Florida 33455.

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## REVIEWS

A guide to bird behavior, volume I.—Donald W. Stokes. 1979. Boston and Toronto, Little, Brown and Company, 336 pp., \$8.95 paperback; and A guide to bird behavior, volume II.—Donald W. Stokes and Lillian Q. Stokes. 1983. Boston and Toronto, Little Brown and Company, 334 pp., \$14.95 cloth.—Publication of volume II provides an opportunity to review the set, as no previous review of the first volume has appeared in *The Florida Field Naturalist*. First, one should note that these books are *not* by the author of *Handyguide to the Coral Reef Fishes of the Caribbean* (by F. Joseph Stokes), despite remarkable similarity in size, covers, bindings and authors' names. Donald Stokes has, however, written a guide to nature in winter, one on observing insects, and a natural history of shrubs and vines. The present volumes are the first-ever field guides to behavior-watching in any group of animals insofar as I am aware.

The two volumes are similar in format, beginning with general introductory material, followed by specific accounts of about two dozen common North American avian species, and concluding with a glossary and separate bibliographies for each species' account. Volume II has a sort of appendix ("checklist of nests and displays") but neither book, alas, contains an index. The introductory material is disappointing, although somewhat helpfully expanded in the second volume. Here a "summary of maintenance behavior" is provided, ostensibly because it is "very similar in all species" (not entirely true) and so omitted from individual accounts. "Eating" is confusingly included in maintenance activities (which are preening, stretching, oiling, scratching and so on), yet differences among species are emphasized, thus immediately belying the foregoing assertion of great similarity. Statements such as "you can look at a new bird and guess what it eats, simply by looking at its bill" is certainly nonsense, and the account of preening is misleadingly oversimplified. Troubles continue with the section on "behavior at your feeder," where the text asserts that few animals fight over food (not true), that songbirds and passerines are the same thing (the former are a subset of the latter), that crest-raising occurs when two birds land near each other (sometimes, in some species), that