Fish Crow in Ithaca New York: On March 16, 1974 the Alan Hahns heard and saw what appeared to be a Fish Crow in the Village of Cayuga Heights, Tompkins County, New York. They subsequently saw and heard it off and on until this writing, May 9, 1974. They observed the bird flying toward Cayuga Lake, and also found it twice in Stewart Park at the head of Cayuga Lake. Since the crow was always alone when perched, a size determination could not be made. The Hahns are familiar with the species from birding in southern United States.

As voice is important in identification of the Fish Crow, this bird's voice was recorded on April 8 by this writer, in the village in a suburban wooded area. The recording was made on a Norelco cassette tape recorder, with an 18" parabola. Since the Crow was high in a tree 200 feet away, near a brook roaring with spring run-off, the recording had to be made at the highest volume setting and background noise is consequently high. However the calls are clearly discernible. Using Leitz 10 x 40 binoculars on this 32 degree, sunny day, I could see that the bird was "shiny", but this character and comparative size could not be definitely determined in the absence of another crow. A two minute recording of the calls was made before it flew, and at no other time was any other type of vocalization heard by the writer or by the Hahns. No call was heard which resembled the Common Crow call.

Virginia Engelhard, bioacoustician of the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, compared the recording with the Fish Crow material in the Laboratory's Sound Library. Her conclusion was that all evidence pointed to its being a Fish Crow. For further verification, a copy was sent to Dr. Dwight Chamberlain, who has made extensive studies of crow vocalizations in North America. He stated that he was "99.9% sure that the voice was that of Fish Crow" and a colleague of his agreed.

Rollin Bauer of the Langmuir Laboratory, curator of the collection at the University, said there is no Fish Crow specimen from New York State in the collection, but Dr. Chamberlain discouraged the collection of this bird.

For an earlier report of a Fish Crow in central New York, see the Region 3 (Finger Lakes) report in *Kingbird* 17:161. The bird was reported by Wilifred Howard in Elmira in April, 1967. In the absence of a specimen it was listed as hypothetical.

Mildred C. Comar, 8 Highland Park Lane, Ithaca, N.Y. 14850

The Golden-winged Warbler in Northern New York: This is an updating of my report in the July 1970 "Kingbird". The status of this species in central New York up to about 1960 is given in separate reports by Scheider (1959) and the Benton (1960). Few data are available for areas north of Oswego and Cayuga countries. However in the vicinity of Kingston, Ontario, in the same latitude as northern Jefferson and southern St. Lawrence counties, the Golden-winged Warbler has been present since 1954 with breeding definitely established in 1961. (Quilliam 1973)

During the past four years I have found this species near the location of the nest discovered in 1970. This year (1974) singing males have been seen at eight or nine locations in the vicinity of Gouverneur, indicating a substantial increase. Since this is near the northern edge of the range of this species, observations in late May or early June are presumed to represent resident birds. It seems evident that the Golden-winged Warbler is now well established in this portion of southern St. Lawrence county, a northward expansion of the breeding range having taken place in the past fifteen years or more.

Substantiation comes from Tom Carrolan of Watertown who has advised me of several Golden-winged Warblers seen this spring in northern Jefferson area. –

J. B. Belknap, 92 Clinton St., Gouverneur, N.Y. 13642.

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An Interspecific Forage Band Predator Alarm Almost Backfires: When walking in the winter forests of New York State one may meet mixed-species groups of birds moving along together in loose associations searching for food. These groups, known technically as interspecific forage bands, usually include members of the tit, nuthatch, creeper, kinglet, and woodpecker families. Similar interspecific forage bands are found in winter temperate zone forests in many parts of the world and have been the focus of much research. These bands are believed to allow more efficient us of limited winter food supplies. A secondary advantage of interspecific banding is that they provide a better predator alarm system, theoretically because the many eyes and ears of the band make it less probable that a predator could approach undetected. When one band member spots a predator its calls alert the whole band. However, this alarm system may backfire as shown by an incident I witnessed while studying interspecific forage bands in Monroe County during the winter of 1973-74.

On the morning of 1/20/74 I was following a band composed of 8 Black-capped Chickadees, 2 White-breasted Nuthatches, 2 Brown Creepers, and a Red-bellied Woodpecker moving through a section of deciduous woods in the southeast corner of Mendon Ponds Park. As usual the foraging birds ignored me as I watched quietly from a distance, recording data. As the band moved along it was joined by 6 Tufted Titmice and 2 Golden-crowned Kinglets. They, too, ignored me at first. However, as I started to move to a new observation position the titmice began calling in alarm and proceeded to 'mob' me. (Mobbing is a group action typically directed at a potential predator which is not actually threatening the group at the moment; for instance crows and jays will mob owls in the daytime). The nuthatches and some of the chickadees joined the mobbing titmice, approaching me and scolding loudly.

Thus far the band's predator alarm system had functioned as it should. A potential predator (myself) had been recognized and the alarm sounded. However, while most of the band was preoccupied with me, a real predator was approaching. Out of the corner of my eye I saw a Cooper's Hawk flying swiftly through the trees toward the band, attracted, I believe, by the noise of the mobbing birds. As the hawk passed less than 20 feet over my head, it noticed me for the first time and veered sharply away. Only then did the mobbing birds of the interspecific forage band see the hawk and fall silent.

This example demonstrates that while the interspecific forage band alarm system may help warn members of potential predators, its activation against one predator may absorb the attention of the members, making them vulnerable to other predators which may actually be attracted by the functioning alarm system.

Christopher Gates, 41 West Brook Road, Pittsford, N.Y. 14534