

1620 Tennessee St., Lawrence, Douglas Co., Kansas

June 16, 1959

Watched a blue jay molest and finally steal one young mourning dove from its nest. The nest and young were located in a mulberry tree, approx. 30 feet from the ground. A blue jay approached nest and was repelled by the forceful flapping of the doves wings, each stroke was directed at the jay who, most of the time managed to keep just beyond the reach of the dove. The dove would, at the same time spread its tail and other wing to cover young. The jay continued the molestation for approx 4 minutes while the dove continually struck at the jay with its wing. Neither of the birds offered ^{vocal} sounds. The jay held its mouth open as if it was hot. During the 4 or 5 minutes of molestation the jay, on at least 10 times, tried to get the young by actual contact with the dove. Once it dropped on the back of the adult dove and pulled feathers. The jay continually worked around the dove from all angles. One of its approaches was from below as if a surprise attack. It finally dove into the dove and actually fought the dove at the nest at which time the jay was able to get hold of the young. The young, which measured 118 mm total length and weighed 52 grams, was dropped because of its weight and it lit on a bird feeder 10' below. The jay dropped to the feeder and pecked open holes in the head and neck of the young bird. At this time I scared it away but in about 20 seconds it returned and tried to carry the bird, which it did for about 15' and then it dropped to the ground. The jay would have returned but we intervened. The dove died about 3 minutes later. no action by the dove after the young was taken from her. On the ground were 3 tail feathers, some body feathers of the dove and 1 tail feather of the jay. About 1 hour later the jay returned to within 4 feet of the nest but did not molest the dove. Four days later this pair of doves (?) started to build another nest 30' away in the same tree. The jay started to molest the nesting building jays before they had completed the nest. These doves were finally driven away from this tree. To my knowledge the jays were not nesting in this tree or within at least a hundred feet of the tree although they were commonly seen in the area and could have had a nest in the adjoining yard.

