

high aggressive content related to the parental-drive. Simmons conducted a large number of experiments with waders to elicit predator-reactions. Among other interesting things he found that most species showed far less fear toward a human lying down than to one standing. He points to a need for objective methods of in-

vestigation and interpretation in the study of predator-reactions and indicates a need for precise work on individual species.

I should like to thank Dr. Frank McKinney, Delta Waterfowl Research Station, for critical examination of this note and for calling my attention to the work by Simmons.

## Great Horned Owl Distraction Display

by R. W. Fyfe, Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History.

Predatory birds rarely exhibit any form of distraction display or "injury feigning" when their nests are approached. Bent (Life Histories of North American Birds of Prey, Vol. II) indicated that such display is exhibited only occasionally by predatory—species—other than the Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus*) in which it occurs regularly. On two separate occasions, May 14 and June 3, 1959, I witnessed distraction display by a Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*) when we visited the nest. On May 14 when we approached the nest, which then contained two newly-hatched young, both parents flew to the opposite hillside about 100 yards distant and remained standing on the ground continually hooting and screaming as we approached the

nest. Then one bird suddenly began walking slowly, alternately dragging and flopping its right wing on the ground. At the same time, presumably the same bird began to utter most un-owl-like screams. This display continued for a short period while the bird moved about twenty feet over the ground; the bird then stood still though occasionally screaming as before. On our second visit, the birds behaved as before except that when flying to the hillside, one bird suddenly fell into low brush as if it had been shot. A moment later it reappeared, walking and dragging its wing as before, all the while uttering the same cry of distress. In each case, the display had lasted only while we were in the immediate vicinity of the nest.

## 1959 Great Horned Owl Banding

by Stuart Houston, Yorkton.



Photo by Cliff Shaw

Young Great Horned Owls in nest

Our 1958 owl banding (22 young in 10 nests) was considered worthy of mention as "a fine example of

field work" in the continent-wide summary of nesting records in the October 1958 issue of **Audubon Field Notes**. But my enthusiastic helper, Bill Horseman, was still not satisfied and determined that we should set a new record in 1959.

Sunday, May 17, was planned as the "big day" and we started out at 5 a.m. for the Saltcoats district. Horseman knew of ten nests and an additional eight had been located by patients of mine. We were encouraged to find that only one nest had been deserted and none destroyed, of the eighteen nests we visited that day. The residents of this area seem more tolerant of owls than they were in the past.

The number of young raised to maturity is often a fairly good index of the food supply; judging by this the owls had a good year. One nest contained four young ready to leave the nest, eight nests had three young