

A Shrike "Graveyard"

By C. TURNER NEARING

THIS SPRING MY WIFE and I have been observing a sight new to us: the outdoor food supply of a Loggerhead Shrike. We first heard reports of small animals impaled on thorns along the T road west of our farm near Cerro Gordo, Ill. A neighbor from Decatur called on us before Decoration Day, saying that he had counted 24 mice, six snakes, a frog, and a small grasshopper on black locust thorns within the space of a tenth of a mile. He stated that young shrikes were feeding on the dead animals (we had read previously that shrikes do not feed on victims after impaling them).

Another friend, a dentist, corroborated the story, saying that he had seen an adult shrike fly in with a mouse and later with a small songbird, impaling the prey with his FEET, rather than his bill. We drove out at once and found six mice and a small garter snake impaled on the thorns of a locust tree growing above a high multiflora rose hedge. Not fifty feet away we found the nest and four immatures. The female shrike was brooding a second clutch of eggs. We have taken a number of pictures of the nest and the impaled animals; in a few weeks I hope to get pictures of the young being fed.

1400 West Macon St., Decatur, Ill.



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