behavior, used to defend territory boundaries and strengthen pair bonds (Houston et al. 1998). We observed no response to call-playbacks, supporting the hypothesis that these birds were not territorial. On the final visit, we observed the birds until sunset. Each owl gave at least one shriek contact call before leaving the roost, with one bird giving five shrieks, about 30 sec apart, before leaving the trees. No owls hooted.

We found no prior records of communal roosting in Great Horned Owls. Because communal roosting is not characteristic of this species, further research could reveal whether this instance was unique, or if observed elsewhere, what specific factors contribute to this behavior. We are indebted to the Raptor Research Center at Boise State University, and HawkWatch International for their support. We especially thank Vincenzo Penteriani, Cheryl Dykstra, and one anonymous reviewer for their detailed edits that shaped the final manuscript. We are grateful to David L. Anderson, Shawn Hawks, Steve Slater, Markus Mika, Marc Bechard, and Jerry Liguori for their helpful guidance, and for comments and edits on earlier drafts of the manuscript.—Bryce Robinson, (e-mail address: brycerobinson@u.boisestate.edu), Raptor Research Center, 1910 University Drive, SN 100, Boise State University, Boise, ID 83725 U.S.A.; and Caitlin Davis, 35 Old Farm Road, Glen Burnie, MD 21060 U.S.A.

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Cooperative Kleptoparasitism by a Pair of Bald Eagles at Lake Sonoma, California

Key Words: Bald Eagle; Haliaeetus leucocephalus; Osprey; Pandion haliaetus; cooperative hunting; kleptoparasitism.

The Bald Eagle (Haliaeetus leucocephalus) is well known for its piratical and kleptoparasitic foraging behavior, taking prey from other eagles or other birds and mammals (Stalmaster 1987, Gerrard and Bortolotti 1988, Buehler 2000), particularly Ospreys (Pandion haliaetus; Poole et al. 2002). Less well documented for Bald Eagles, and also for other sea and fish eagles in the genus Haliaeetus, is the extent to which they employ cooperative hunting tactics to increase capture rate. According to Ellis et al. (1993), the characteristics of cooperative hunting include a clear division of labor and the orderly sharing of spoils with enhanced success, with coordinative signals sometimes present. When employed by raptors, separate roles are sometimes evident, but sharing of prey is limited. Cooperative hunting by Bald Eagles and other Haliaeetus eagles has been reported by Thiel (1983), Fischer (1984), Folk (1992), Berger (1994), Poole (1994), Berkelman et al. (1999), and Stanley (2002). Cramp and Simmons (1980) reported cooperative hunting by pairs of White-tailed Eagles (H. albicilla) in Norway as “not uncommon,” particularly when the eagles were pursuing sea-ducks (e.g., eiders [Somateria spp.]). In addition, immature Bald Eagles hunted cooperatively in a group in Oregon and Washington (Buchanan and Watson 2010). Herein, we report behavior we believe to be previously undescribed: namely, “cooperative kleptoparasitism” by a pair of Bald Eagles robbing an Osprey at Lake Sonoma in northern California.

Lake Sonoma is located on Dry Creek, a tributary of the Russian River in Sonoma County, about 120 km north of