

Differences between Permanent and Summer Resident Bird Responses to the Call of a Screech
Owl

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August 4, 2012

Abstract:

Passerines, or perching birds, will occasionally mob raptors to get them to leave the area. This event can be simulated using a recording of a screech owl. The screech owl calls will attract many small passerines that will have different reactions towards the calls. By recording the types and numbers of birds that join the mobbing event it is possible to get an idea of the bird population in the area. Are more permanent resident birds responding than summer resident birds? One would think that summer resident birds would react more aggressively since they are here to breed, and if their young were present they would want to defend them. Data collected over four years, from four different field biology classes, show that permanent resident and summer resident bird response is random. The data were collected through bird mobbing trials using recorded Screech Owl calls. Birds that responded to the calls were recorded on data sheets. This result could change if more information was collected about the total number of bird species in the areas where mobbing trials were conducted.