

**ABSTRACTS FOR *CONDOR* 103(2) MAY 2001**

**SHORT COMMUNICATIONS**

**VOCAL MIMICRY IN DISTRESS CALLS OF PHAINOPEPLAS<sup>1</sup>**

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*Abstract* Phainopeplas (*Phainopepla nitens*) utter contact calls, loud distress screams, and 37 other distinguishable vocalizations when captured, including imitations of at least 12 species. In southern California, Phainopeplas captured in the desert and coastal woodlands imitated species from both regions, suggesting that individuals occupy both habitats during the year and have an extended period of learning that spans the period of time when they move between regions. There was no significant difference in the number of calls imitated based on sex, male age, or habitat. A high percentage of Phainopeplas in both desert and coastal woodlands imitated Red-tailed Hawks (*Buteo jamaicensis*) and Northern Flickers (*Colaptes auratus*), whereas the use of other species' calls varied with habitat. Phainopeplas did not simply imitate the calls of the most abundant species or those that were most vocal.

**[Back to \*CONDOR\* 103\(2\) MAY 2001 Table of Contents](#)**