**Song matching by neighboring western male marsh wrens.** Somewhere west of the Great Plains, among western marsh wrens, settle in beside a marsh and focus on the singing of just one male (you can warm up with this recording, almost an hour from one California male: ♫231). What an incredible variety of songs he delivers, each song almost always different from the one before. Careful study would reveal that he eventually repeats himself (as I have illustrated in ♫232), confirming that he has a discrete number of repeatable songs that constitute his large repertoire. Not only does he repeat particular songs, but the song sequences are often the same as well (see ♫233)—maybe that’s one way for him to keep track of all his songs.

Now, as with the corvids, expand your listening to hear how two neighbors interact. With a little time and patience, you will begin to hear the matching. Why and when they choose to match is unknown, and sometimes they match hardly at all. Why not? I wish we knew.

♫231: Nearly an hour of singing from one male. I did my best to hold the parabolic reflector on him, but he at times escaped my aim for a few seconds. Enjoy the “raw” field recording—this is the best that I could do with this male as he flew up and down the drainage ditch beside the road. Enjoy a good, easy listen, but there’s so much you could do to search for patterns in this male’s behavior. June 10, 2018. Sierra Valley, California (58:16)

Play-231

♫232: Here’s evidence that the male in the previous recording is capable of repeating himself, i.e., that he has a set repertoire of discrete song types that he can recall from memory and sing again. Four examples of one song type are extracted from the nearly hour-long recording (the four renditions of this particular song were found at 2:06, 9:18, 30:30, and 42:51; the song at 13:18 is slightly different). June 10, 2018. Sierra Valley, California. (0:19)

Play-232

♫233: Not only does a male eventually repeat one of his songs, but the sequences in which he delivers his different songs are often the same as well. Here, I’ve taken the four examples from ♫232 and included the next two songs as well; careful listening (and sonagram study) reveals that he sings A B C . . . A B C . . . A B D . . . A B D. Song A is always followed by song B, which is followed by either C or D. June 10, 2018. Sierra Valley, California. (0:42)

Play-233