

The Mangrove Cuckoo breeds as far north as the Anclote Keys, Pasco County, Florida, some 250 km southeast of St. George Island and along the western Gulf north to Tamaulipas, Mexico (A. O. U. 1957, Check-list of North American birds, fifth ed., Baltimore, Amer. Ornithol. Union; Robertson 1978, Mangrove Cuckoo pp. 57-58 in H. W. Kale, II, (ed.) Rare and endangered biota of Florida, vol. 2 birds, Univ. Presses of Florida, Gainesville). Our observation represents the northernmost record for the species (29°42'N, 84°52'W) and only the second record for the upper Gulf coast (cf. Webster 1965, Aud. Field Notes 19: 398-401). The origin of vagrant Mangrove Cuckoos on the northern and western Gulf coast (Webster 1976, Amer. Birds 30: 95-97) is unknown, but it is possible that they are individuals from Mexico rather than Florida or the West Indies, as is the case with some other species, e.g. White-winged Dove (*Zenaidura asiatica*). Our detailed descriptions were critically compared (by Graves) with specimens of ten recognized races of *C. minor* in the American Museum of Natural History. The buffy cinnamon underparts of the individual we observed resembled those of *C. minor continentalis* of the Gulf slope of Mexico, rather than the whitish or pale buffy underparts of *C. minor maynardi*, the breeding form of Florida, Cuba, and the Bahamas. The distance from St. George Island to the nearest Mexican breeding populations (measured around the arc of the Gulf) is ca. 1700 km; the trans-Gulf distance to the Yucatan Peninsula is ca. 940 km. The weather conditions during the week preceding our observation offer no evidence bearing on this matter. Specimens are needed to determine the origin of these birds.

Comparison of specimens was made possible by a grant from the Frank M. Chapman Memorial Fund.—GARY R. GRAVES, *Department of Biological Science, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida 32306*; ROBIN CARTER, *1912 Dahlia Drive, Tallahassee, Florida*, and STEVE N. G. HOWELL, *40 Cae Glas Road, Rumney, Cardiff, United Kingdom*.

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Common Crows pulling the tail and stealing food from a river otter.—On 15 January 1981, my wife and I saw Common Crows (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) stealing prey from a river otter (*Lutra canadensis*) at the Hendrie Ranch, 24 km south of Lake Placid, Florida. As far as I am aware, there have been no previous reports of Common Crows stealing food from mammals, nor, indeed, of any corvid from river otters. We watched an otter catching walking catfish (*Clarias batrachus*) and resting by a water hole where the fish had concentrated in a winter of drought (Kilham, unpubl.).

The otter was lying partly in and partly out of the water eating a fish. Four crows were watching within 30-50 cm of its head when a fifth crow alighted by its tail, giving it a hard tweak. The otter dropped the fish to whirl around. A crow near the otter's head then seized the head end of the fish and flew off with it. Bent (1946, U.S. Nat. Mus. Bull. 191) described similar kleptoparasitism of a dog gnawing a bone by three Common Ravens (*Corvus corax*), one of which pulled the dog's tail.

In 12 hours of watching the otter in the course of 11 mornings, we saw crows peck the otter's tail 26 other times, while the otter was either resting on the sand or walking to the water. Although the attacks often looked like simple pecking, we noted twice that the blows were delivered with the bill slightly open. It seemed possible, therefore, that the crows may have been

pinching and pulling. Tail pulling was described by Goodwin (1976, *Crows of the world*, Ithaca, New York, Comstock Publishing Assoc.) for a number of corvids. Kleptoparasitism, the main subject of this report, was reviewed by Brockmann and Barnard (1979, *Anim. Behav.* 27: 487-514). Our studies were made while staying at the Archbold Biological Station.—LAWRENCE KILHAM, *Department of Microbiology, Dartmouth Medical School, Hanover, New Hampshire 03755.*

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Summary of the 1981 fall meeting.—Bob and Margie Sokol, ably assisted by hospitable members of the Sarasota Audubon Society, hosted a fine, well organized meeting of the FOS on 16-18 October at the Holiday Inn-North in Sarasota. Field trips to Myakka River State Park led by Ken Alvarez and Ruth Hollister and to City Island and Beer Can Island led by Jack and Lou Newton were pleasant and productive. The papers given were: "A raptor roadside census in SW Florida" by Jeffrey L. Lincer; "Seasonal expectations in Myakka River State Park" by Capt. Robert Dye; "Banding birds on Casey Key" by Annette Stedman; "Little Tern fledglings—Comparison of beach nesting vs. roof top nesting" by Lisa Miller; "Laughing Gulls in the Tampa Bay Area—Then and now" by Lise Hanners and Steve Patton; and "Red Knot study" by Brian Harrington. Our delightful dinner speaker, Malcolm M. Simons recounted the many values and facets of birding and the enjoyment of birds and proved his appreciation of them all in his talk entitled "Don't call me a bird watcher." The skin quiz, prepared by Glen Woolfenden, was won by Bob Loftin.

A nominating committee has been appointed of Bob Loftin (Chairman) Jerry Cutlip, and Herb Kale. Wes Biggs will have a table promoting FOS at the meeting of the American Birding Association in Miami in the spring of 1982. The board decided to delay publication of the "Checklist of Florida birds" until 1983 so that we can follow the revised AOU checklist, which is nearing completion. Rare bird sightings may be reported to the newly appointed Records Committee of Maggy Bowman (Secretary), Lyn Atherton, Lucy Duncan, Henry M. Stevenson, and Wally George. Discussion at the board meeting led to a decision that we should not get involved in tours. Therefore, we will not sponsor a birding trip to Cuba. Committees are working on a handbook for local hosts of FOS meetings. This should be very helpful to those in charge of meetings, and we are looking for places to have meetings. The arm patches are now available for \$4.00 each. Fred Lohrer has them for sale now and at FOS meetings. The Alabama Ornithological Society is planning a Bird-A-Thon at Dauphin Island in April 1982. Contact Ted Below for details and phone numbers. A resolution of appreciation for Bill Courser's services as president was voted by the board. The spring 1982 meeting will be held at Flamingo, Everglades National Park, with Jim Kushlan as host. Fred Lohrer, outgoing editor of FFN, was commended for his diligence and sustained hard work on behalf of FOS.—BARBARA C. KITTLESON.