NOTES

Red-bellied Woodpeckers roosting outside of cavities.—Red-bellied Woodpeckers (*Melanerpes carolinus*), like most woodpeckers, typically roost and nest in cavities (Stickel 1964, Wilson Bull. 76: 382-383). Short (1978, Wilson Bull. 91: 16-28) suggested that year-round excavation of new cavities by picids indicates the selective advantage afforded by the safety of these sites. The following description of several Red-bellied Woodpeckers roosting together in cabbage palm trees (*Sabal palmetto*) at two sites on the Archbold Biological Station, 12 km S of Lake Placid, Highlands County, Florida, is the first report of the species regularly roosting outside of cavities.

From one to three unbanded Red-bellied Woodpeckers roosted among the lowermost living or dead fronds of a 10-m-high palm checked on nine occasions in January 1981 (1 male, 5 nights; 2 males, 1 night; 2 males and 1 female, 3 nights). Each bird roosted under a separate frond by clinging to the leaf midrib near the locus of palmation (Fig. 1). Beginning June 1981, adults were color banded and one pair of Red-bellied Woodpeckers was found to defend the area containing the palm. Both birds roosted in cavities in a nest tree from summer 1981 until April 1982 when the tree fell. On six days in May and June 1982, the male was found roosting in a newly excavated nest cavity. On three of these days, the female was found roosting in the palm.

A second site about 1.5 km away included four cabbage palms clustered in an area 20 m in diameter. Birds roosted in the one palm tree most isolated from the others and no physical differences were noted among the 4 trees. An adult roosted in the palm on 27 July 1981. On 23 September 1981 an adult female flew into the lowermost fronds but apparently failed to grasp a midrib and fell from the fronds. It then flew elsewhere to roost. Beginning November 1981, the site was checked once per week at dawn or before sundown, and two to four birds were observed roosting in the tree through March 1982. These included a pair, a male of a second pair, and a female of a third pair. The palms were on the boundary of the territories of the first and second pairs. The female of the third pair was never seen in the area except to roost. The birds flew to the roost site at different times and no conflicts were observed. The first bird leaving the palm in the morning seemed to stimulate the others to leave. In April 1982, the two males started roosting in newly excavated nest cavities. The female of the first pair continued to roost in the palm through June 1982 after which observations were discontinued. The male of the third pair disappeared in April 1982, and his mate was only seen in the study area during May and early June when roosting in the palm.

The palm-roosting habit of some Red-bellied Woopeckers at the two sites may have been the result of the shortage of cavities. Intraspecific interactions over cavities were observed between Red-bellied Woodpecker mates and between residents and transients. Interactions among Common Flickers (*Colaptes auratus*), Red-bellied, Red-headed (*M. erythrocephalus*), Downy (*Picoides pubescens*), and Hairy (*P. villosus*) Woodpeckers were also seen. Red-bellied Woodpeckers attempted to expel flying squirrels (*Glaucomys volans*) from cavities and were sometimes successful. However, they were not seen attempting to expel gray squirrels (*Sciurus carolinensis*). Screech Owls (*Otus asio*) were found in three former woodpecker cavities. Although Red-bellied Woodpeckers generally are not social (Kilham 1961, Wilson Bull. 73: 237-254), the presence

Fig. 1. Red-bellied Woodpecker roosting under the lowermost frond of a cabbage palm tree. Photo obtained with electronic flash 30 min after sunset and lens aimed 90° from the horizontal.

of a particularly favorable outside roost site may encourage its use by several individuals. The fronds of *Sabal palmetto*, which is found throughout Florida and coastal Georgia and South Carolina (Small 1972, Manual of the southeastern flora, New York, New York, Hafner Publishing Co.), apparently provide such a site; thus this palm species may be used commonly for roosting by Red-bellied Woodpeckers in areas where both occur and where cavities are scarce.

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The Common Eider in Florida.—On 12 November 1981 Pat Ware saw an eider swimming in the surf 250 m S of Doctors Pass, Naples, Collier County, Florida. On the same day I photographed the bird and identified it as an immature male Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima*). Its plumage closely resembled the plates in Palmer (1976) and Peterson (1980). The identification of the Common Eider was confirmed by H. M. Stevenson and P. W. Sykes, Jr. (pers. comm.), who examined photographs taken on 26 December 1981 (photograph # P341 Tall Timbers Research Station).