

a reproduction of the manuscript page, showing changes of certain words and the obliteration of two lines. At the time when Audubon made his voyage and kept this journal he was an humble and unknown man. He had then no reputation that might need to be protected from defamation. Since Audubon himself had penned the lines, and since by fair inference another hand than his had blotted part and changed the meaning of what remained, an effort seemed justifiable to recover them precisely as they were written. The Harvard Museum of Comparative Zoölogy, custodian of the journal, has caused the obliterated passage to be examined by infra-red photography, but with disappointing result. The passage has been inked and rubbed as with a finger-tip, and over that again heavy pen strokes have been laid, and photography fails to reveal anything legible beneath the mutilation. So far then as this item is concerned, we seem now to know all that is to be known.—BAYARD H. CHRISTY, *Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.*

**Termite-eating by birds in British Columbia.**—The recent note by Blake (Auk 58 (1): 104, 1941) on termites taken by birds has prompted me to consult my notebooks with reference to the avian species of this region that I have personally recorded as eating these insects. In extreme southwestern British Columbia the extensive areas of deforested land, strewn with decaying logs and stumps, provides ideal habitat for termites. Three species occur: *Zootermopsis angusticollis*, *Z. nevadensis*, and *Reticulotermes hesperis*. The first of these is by far the most abundant and in August, September, and October huge flights of winged individuals take place. It is to this species that the following notes refer.

One of the most interesting phenomena associated with the mass dispersal flights of *Z. angusticollis* is the large number of gulls, swifts, and nighthawks that rapidly congregate over the area. The gulls are, for the most part, Bonaparte's Gull (*Larus philadelphia*) and Short-billed Gull (*Larus canus brachyrhynchus*) with a few California Gulls (*Larus californicus*) and these birds will frequently penetrate two miles or more from salt water while 'termiting.' All feeding is carried out on the wing, the gulls circling and hovering in active pursuit of the insects. Usually along with the gulls are numbers of Black Swifts and nighthawks.

The Lewis Woodpecker (*Asyndesmus lewisii*) normally conducts much of its feeding flycatcher-fashion, on sorties from snag-tops after passing insects. In August and September it consumes large quantities of termites. I have observed Harris's Woodpecker (*Dryobates villosus harrisi*) behaving similarly but only upon infrequent occasions.

Several other species have been observed catching *Z. angusticollis* close to or on the ground. My notes contain definite records concerning *Colaptes cafer caurinus*, *Sialia mexicana occidentalis*, *Tyrannus tyrannus*, *Turdus migratorius caurinus*, *Hylocichla ustulata ustulata*, *Myodestes townsendi*, *Piranga ludoviciana*, and *Euphagus cyanocephalus*.—I. McT. COWAN, *Department of Zoology, The University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B. C.*