

small pieces, dehydrated in an air oven at 80°C., ground into fine powder, and transferred into a fat-extraction thimble. The fat was extracted with 1:1 ethanol-ether mixture in a soxhlet apparatus. Results obtained are presented in the table, and for the sake of comparison data on the muscle of vertebrates (adopted from George, 1952) and on the pectoralis of birds examined by George and Jyoti (1955) are also included. From these data it can be safely generalized that the *pectoralis major* of actively flying birds can be characterized by high fat content.

Fat deposition in the muscle is not only governed by the enzymatic systems in the muscle fibers but also by certain hormones in the peripheral circulatory system. Since both these factors appear to be equally important, a direct correlation between the amount of muscle fat and activity cannot be expected. Though utilization of fat in the flight muscles of birds, bats (George and Jyoti, *J. Anim. Morph. Physiol.*, 5: 57-60, 1958), and insects (Weis-Fogh, *Phil. Trans. Roy. Soc.*, B 237: 1-36, 1952) during long and sustained activity is now quite well established, the presence of a high percentage of fat does not mean that fat is utilized more in the muscle. But nevertheless it now appears certain that intracellular muscle fat serves as the reserve store of energy, which is mobilized and utilized when needed and continuously recharged from fat depots such as adipose tissue and liver.—J. C. GEORGE and R. M. NAIK, *Department of Zoology, M. S. University of Baroda, Baroda 2, India.*

Note on the Palaearctic Robins.—In his review of Charles Vaurie's recent book, "The Birds of the Palaearctic Fauna" (*Auk*, 76: 442-444, 1959), my old friend, Professor Erwin Stresemann, praises the work as much as I would have myself. But he also deplors the author's use of broad genera. Although he does not name the "two enterprising authors" who started in America a "trend towards revolutionary generic consolidation," it is not difficult either to realize that I am one of them, or to guess who the other one is. He, however, admits that "proposals for drastic changes do no harm when advanced in special articles." I would like to point out that all the generic "lumping" adopted by Vaurie has been discussed before the issue of his work by himself, in his numerous papers in *American Museum Novitates*, and elsewhere, or by myself and other ornithologists in special published studies.

I am not proposing to discuss here the merits of wide genera. I have done so before. I will just remind the reader that generic terms are meant to point out relationship between species, not slight differences. "Time-honored" names, which tend to obscure and confuse relationship, simply should not be honored any longer when a better knowledge of the morphology and biology of the birds indicates affinities previously unnoticed.

My own criticism of Vaurie's book applies, on the contrary, to his excessive generic splitting of some of the Old World Robins. He very well understood the close relationship of the species in his paper on the systematics of the group (*Am. Mus. Novitates*, No. 1731, 10 June 1955), and it is a pity that he changed his mind later on, no doubt under outside pressure. It is totally inadmissible for anyone familiar with the birds in life to place in two distinct genera (*Erithacus* and *Luscinia*) the European Robin (*rubecula*) and the Japanese (*akahige*). I have often observed these birds in the wild state and in aviaries. I actually have kept them for many years in contiguous compartments for the purpose of comparison. If it is true that the voice differs, all other biological characteristics agree closely. Indeed this difference in the voice is the only possible, if not too convincing, reason not to consider the two forms conspecific. The fact that the sexes are more differ-

ent in *akahige* than in *rubecula* is of little significance. I personally believe that the genus *Erithacus* should also include all the species placed by Vaurie in the genus *Luscinia* as there are no differences among them important enough to warrant generic distinction. It was even a greater surprise to find the species *sibilans* separated in the genus *Pseudaedon*. I have never seen this little Robin in its breeding territory, but it was a common winter visitor to northern Indochina, where I observed and collected it repeatedly. It is a Robin as much as any other species; the insignificance of the song and the color of the eggs do certainly not warrant generic distinction any more than in the case of *Phoenicurus moussieri*, for instance. It resembles very closely the female of *E. cyane*.

Authors who accept without argument the large genus *Turdus* for all the typical Thrushes, some of which differ even more among themselves than the comparatively few species of Robins do, should be consistent in including all the latter in the genus *Erithacus*.—J. DELACOUR, *Los Angeles County Museum, Los Angeles, California*.

First Records of Cattle Egrets (*Bubulcus ibis*) in Guatemala.—At about 2:30 P.M. on 24 April 1959, a Cattle Egret flew into the Cibal Aguada at Tikal, Peten, Guatemala. It was in the company of two mature Little Blue Herons (*Florida caerulea*) at the time. The taboo against collecting at this archeological site was temporarily lifted when the story of the comparatively recent spread of this active bird from Africa was explained. The bird was still there the next morning, and I collected it on 25 April 1959. The specimen is now at the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard College. It was a mature male, with enlarged testes, and the crown and nape were a light, buff color. The bill was a clear, lemon yellow above but lighter or whitish yellow below. The tarsi and feet were black, contrasting with thighs of greenish yellow where exposed up to the feathers. The irides were yellowish white. Weight was 318.3 grams.

This appears to be a first record of the Cattle Egret in the Department of Peten, Guatemala. Tikal is a very recently "opened" area situated in heavy forest, with an airstrip only about four years old. There are no cattle in the area, which is located about 200 miles north of Guatemala City, at an elevation of about 500 feet.

Two other records for the Mexican part of Yucatan Peninsula were reported by Reginald Denham (Auk, 76: 359, 360, 1959).

Two other Cattle Egrets taken in Guatemala were reported to me, as quoted below by permission of Hugh C. Land. "We took two specimens in Guatemala, both from a flock of about fifty birds that could be seen almost daily in a meadow with a herd of cattle. The first skin was taken on November 6th, 1958. It was collected by a native and prepared by Larry Wolf, a student at the University of Michigan. The sex of the bird could not be determined. I took a female on January 12th, 1959. Both specimens came from an area five miles south-west of Panzós in the Department of Alta Vera Paz. The elevation here is about 200 feet above sea level. This locale is in the Polochic Valley, about thirty miles west of Lake Izabal."—FRANK B. SMITHE, *645 West 44th Street, New York 36, New York*, and HUGH C. LAND, *University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma*.

Copulatory Behavior of the Red-headed Woodpecker.—On 16 May 1959, in Ann Arbor (Washtenaw County), Michigan, I observed the interesting position assumed by Red-headed Woodpeckers (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*) during copulation. In preparation for the act, one of the birds, presumably the female, perched