

production in autumn in temperate latitudes has recently been noted in several passerine species by A. J. Marshall (*Proc. Zool. Soc. London*, 121: 727-740, 1952), G. H. Orians (*Auk*, 77: 379-398, 1960) and R. K. Selander and D. J. Nicholson (*Condor*, 64: 81-91, 1962). From the comments of these authors it may be inferred that factors favorable to autumnal breeding include a tendency toward colonial (group) nesting, in which the behavior of individual pairs leading to reproduction is reinforced by the presence of other similarly behaving birds, an ample food supply, protracted autumnal rainfall, and relatively moderate temperatures. All of these conditions variously obtained at the above locality in Rocha in the first half of May in 1963.

Financial support for studies of mammals in Uruguay that led to these observations was provided by a grant from the U. S. Army Medical Research and Development Command Number DA-MD-49-193-63 G82 to the Department of Mammalogy of the American Museum of Natural History.

I am grateful to Dr. Leslie M. Tuck for information on the breeding of snipe elsewhere.—JON C. BARLOW, *Department of Ornithology, Royal Ontario Museum, The University of Toronto, Toronto 5, Ontario.*

Cowbird removes warbler nestling from nest.—H. Friedmann (*U. S. Natl. Mus., Bull.* 233, p. 25, 1963), relying mostly on H. Mayfield's data (*The Kirtland's Warbler*, Cranbrook Inst. Sci., Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, 1960; see pp. 144-181; *Auk*, 78: 162-163, 1961), pointed out that the female Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*) maintains an interest in the host's nest after having laid an egg in it. Mayfield found that the cowbird makes frequent inspections of the host's nest after laying an egg, and not uncommonly removes one or more of the host's eggs on these subsequent visits. The cowbird's interest usually lags, however, as the period of incubation by the host lengthens and hatching approaches. Friedmann (*op. cit.*: 27-28) recorded only two reliable instances of female cowbirds showing interest in young birds; one was feeding a nestling cowbird and the other was feeding a cowbird fledgling. A. D. DuBois (*Auk*, 73: 286, 1956) observed a female cowbird strike into a nest of Song Sparrows (*Melospiza melodia*), injuring one nestling and carrying off another. Since such behavior is unusual, the following incident is of interest.

At 1015 hours on 28 June 1966 I stepped onto the front porch of the main office of the Audubon Camp of Maine on Hog Island, Lincoln County, Maine. The sound of the screen door slamming behind me startled a group of five cowbirds from a feeder 30 feet away. One female flew to a red spruce (*Picea rubens*) and landed just above a bough containing the nest of a Black-throated Green Warbler (*Dendroica virens*). The nest held three warblers and one cowbird, each about three days old. Within approximately three seconds the cowbird looked down at the nest, flew to its rim, reached into the nest, and flew away carrying a nestling by grasping it with its bill across the eyes. The cowbird dropped the warbler in an open area. The cowbird perched near me as I examined the warbler, gave a phrased vocalization, and flew away. The warbler died within a few minutes. I did not see either of the adult warblers during the incident. The other two nestling warblers and the cowbird nestling fledged about nine days later.

Such behavior, if more common than thought but merely unobserved, may partially explain the regularity with which nest watchers record the unexplained absence of nestlings.—JAMES TATE, JR., *Department of Zoology and Physiology, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska.*