

**Black-necked Screamers seen feeding a chick.**—Two of a captive trio of Black-necked Screamers (*Chauna chavaria*) presently in the bird collection at the New York Zoological Park nested during mid-June 1969 and produced a single chick. The nest was a beaten down clump of ornamental grass (*Miscanthus sinensis*). The screamers added small sticks and leaves they carried to the site in their beaks. Hatched on 2 August, the young screamer remained at the nest site for 3 full days, closely attended by both parents and the odd female. Behavior during this period gave rise to a strong suspicion that at least one of them was feeding the chick by regurgitation. This point is debatable, but after the young bird left the nest we saw the parents actually pick up food in their beaks and place it in the chick's open gape. On the afternoon of 7 August we watched the male of the breeding pair select turkey pellets, a commercially prepared poultry ration, from an exhibit food contained and feed the chick in just this manner as it floated near him in a shallow waterway; on 12 August the same parent fed the chick popcorn and pieces of grass in the same way. To the authors' knowledge this behavior is unrecorded for screamers and rare for any member of the Anseriformes. Johnsgard (Wildfowl Trust, 12th Ann. Rept., 1961, pp. 99–100) reports very similar bill-to-bill feeding of goslings by the parent Magpie Goose (*Anseranas semipalmata*).—JOSEPH BELL, DONALD BRUNING, and ANDREW WINNEGAR, New York Zoological Park, Bronx, New York 10460.

**The relationships of *Porzana flaviventer*.**—A lack of agreement as to the generic characters of rails has resulted in many genera that are either poorly defined, monotypic, or composed of groups of unrelated species. Seldom has any taxonomic treatment of this family resulted in what I believe to be natural groupings. Decisions here are rendered difficult because of the general homogeneity of rails. Recently, progress was made when Benson and Winterbottom (1968) drew attention to the similarity of the South American *Porzana albicollis* to *Crecopsis egregia* of Africa, and suggested that the two species be considered congeneric. They chose to remove *albicollis* from *Porzana* and place it in *Crecopsis*, rather than merging the two genera. Wolters (1969) points out that *Mustelirallus* Bonaparte antedates *Crecopsis* Sharpe and should be used if *albicollis* is included with *egregia*.

It has not been suggested recently that the delicate little Neotropical rail, *Porzana flaviventer*, be placed in a genus other than *Porzana*, although it does not closely resemble any of the species of that assemblage. Actually it is not clear how this species has failed being placed in *Laterallus*, a genus that seems to have become a convenient receptacle for nearly all the small American rails, regardless of their other characters. For instance, certain species of *Laterallus* resemble typical *Porzana* much more than does *flaviventer*. Ridgway (1920) apparently was not satisfied that *flaviventer* was intimately allied to the other *Porzana* species and erected for it the monotypic genus *Hapalocrex*, based mainly on the proportions of the alula and toes. Unfortunately, as Wetmore and Swales (1931) point out, the characters Ridgway used for *Hapalocrex* are not diagnostic when comparison is made with other species of *Porzana*. Ridgway and Friedmann (1941: 134–135) maintain *Hapalocrex* as a subgenus of *Porzana*, describe its characters in detail, and suggest no other relationship. Examination of various species of rails discloses that the closest relative of *P. flaviventer* lies outside the genus *Porzana* as it is now defined.

*Poliolimnas* is a monotypic genus first delimited by Sharpe (1893) for *Porphyrio cinereus* Vieillot. Sharpe's brief diagnosis (also based on proportions of the wings and feet) does not adequately distinguish *Poliolimnas* from *Porzana*, and some subsequent