

left. On 5 July the snake returned to the empty nest a second time, came up through the bottom of the nest and passed its entire length through the $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch diameter hole. During both incidents the parent birds chipped excitedly and approached within 2 feet of the snake, but made no overt attack.

These incidents explain other happenings noted during the study. Several nests found empty of the eggs or young they contained the preceding day showed no sign of disturbance other than an occasional circular hole in the bottom. Blue racers were common in the area and were undoubtedly responsible for much of this predation. Crooks and Hendrickson (1953, Iowa Bird Life 23: 12) also reported two nests, each with a hole in the side about 1 inch in diameter, from which the young had been removed without disturbance. The fact that snakes will return to a nest even if disturbed may explain my finding nests with part of their contents gone, only to return later and find the nest empty.—LOUIS B. BEST, *Department of Zoology, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois 61801*. Accepted 26 Feb. 73.

Birds associating with hippopotamuses.—From July to September 1971 we undertook a general survey of the population of hippopotamuses in that part of the Mara River that lies within the boundaries of the Serengeti National Park, Tanzania (Olivier and Laurie, 1973). During this period we frequently noted the following bird species on the backs of hippos: Common Sandpiper (*Tringa hypoleucos*), African Pied Wagtail (*Motacilla aguimp*), Red-billed Oxpecker (*Buphagus erythrorhynchus*), and Yellow-billed Oxpecker (*Buphagus africanus*).

The Common Sandpiper has often been noted on the backs of hippos (Rice 1963, Thomson 1964) foraging from there for aquatic organisms. Pooley (1967) gives further records of birds fishing off hippos. Although Curry-Lindahl (1961) records 28 species of birds associating with hippos, including *M. aguimp* that he saw alighting on hippos for a few seconds, we do not know of any previous record in the literature of this wagtail feeding extensively while on hippos, despite the fact that this is undoubtedly a common association for this typically waterside species, at least on the Mara. The birds we observed displayed similar behavior to those on land, and appeared to be chasing insects hovering over the hippo.

Of particular interest is that we observed almost every day both species of oxpecker feeding simultaneously on the same hippo. They fed entirely on tissue gleaned from wounds, often to the extreme discomfort of the hippo. Both species on the same animal have previously been recorded by Attwell (1966), who considered it a possibility that they may be an example of the rare phenomenon of two species making the same demands on their habitat. Certainly analyses of stomach contents by Moreau (1933) and van Someren (1951) failed to indicate significant differences in the diets of the two species.

There are few places where the ranges of the two species overlap, and our observations would support a view that there is little ecological separation between them, and that despite this they appear tolerant of each other. We know nothing of their comparative feeding habits around this region of the Mara, apart from on hippos, but accepting that their main intake is from large game mammals in both species (Attwell 1966), one concludes that they are as likely to feed together off other species in the area (e.g. buffalo, giraffe, zebra, elephant) as off hippo, although at the time these were very scarce in comparison to hippos, and anyway do not represent such a potentially rich food source when assessed in terms of

incidence of open wounds, which is remarkably high in hippos because of a comparatively high level of intraspecific aggression.

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First specimen of Reddish Egret from British Honduras.—While driving on the highway between Belize and Cayo in British Honduras on 4 August 1969, we collected an immature Reddish Egret (*Dichromanassa rufescens*) that was feeding at the edge of a shallow pond approximately 40 km southwest of Belize. The bird was a male with little subcutaneous fat; its left testis measured 5×3 mm. The bill was black on the distal half, shading to pale gray basally, the iris was pale yellow, and the legs and feet black. The specimen, the first from British Honduras and the southernmost from Caribbean Central America, is No. 19749 in the collection of the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology.

Although the immature plumages of the Reddish Egret are poorly known, the present specimen appears to be in the Basic I plumage as described in Palmer (1962, Handbook of North American birds, vol. 1, New Haven, Connecticut, Yale Univ. Press). Head, neck, and breast are pale reddish-brown with traces of light gray and lack the plumes characteristic of adult plumages. Underparts and back are slaty gray with a rich suffusion of light brown; scapulars and wing coverts have prominent brown edgings. Measurements of the slightly worn specimen are: wing chord, 320 mm; tail, 106; exposed culmen, 98. Because it is an immature, our specimen cannot be allocated to subspecies.

Russell (1964, Ornithol. Monogr. No. 1: 39) mentions only one previous record of the Reddish Egret for British Honduras, a single individual E. Willis saw near the mouth of the Belize River on 7 August 1957. There are two sight records from Guatemala: three birds seen on 12 March 1958 at Tikal, el Petén (Smithe 1966, The birds of Tikal Garden City, New York, Natural History Press, p. 12) and "several seen" (no date given) by Anthony on the Rio Polochic near Lake Yzabal