

nearby breeding colonies, probably those in Cuba or the Bahamas. The large number of recent records suggest that cormorants either have long been overlooked in Puerto Rico or the degree to which they stray to the island and find suitable habitat has dramatically increased. Actually, it is probable that a combination of these two factors, the latter being more significant, account for the apparent change in status of these birds. All recent cormorant sightings, with the exception of that of Bolte, were from impounded or dredged fresh water lakes that weren't in existence a few decades ago, when most earlier observers studied the island's avifauna. Such localities, in addition to creating new and quite suitable habitat for cormorants, are more regularly surveyed by wildlife biologists than coastal mangrove lagoons, where a significant number of cormorants may occur annually but continue to go unnoticed. It is difficult, however, to conceive that this factor could account for such a substantial increase in cormorant numbers. These records could reflect increased cormorant populations in their source area.

Bond (1974, Nineteenth supplement to the check-list of the birds of the West Indies (1956), Philadelphia, Acad. Nat. Sci.) recently commented that "all cormorants reported from Puerto Rico, the Lesser Antilles and Tobago were probably vagrants of *P. olivaceus* from South America." This statement is in need of significant modification. It might be more accurate to say that although proof exists that *P. auritus* occur in Puerto Rico, there is little doubt that *P. olivaceus* also occurs as a stray (though this remains to be substantiated), both species apparently represented by wandering immatures from colonies in the Bahamas and Cuba. (Puerto Rico's Double-crested Cormorants probably come from the Bahamas or Cuba since this species is not known to breed in South America; therefore, it is likely that the island's Olivaceous Cormorants also derive from this area rather than South America.)—Received 10 May 1977, accepted 27 November 1978.

#### Observations at a Nest of a Partial Albino Red-headed Woodpecker

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Unusual individuals in a population always seem to arouse human curiosity, but too often that curiosity is quickly satisfied by preserving the specimen for posterity and future speculation as to its "fitness." We report here observations at a successful nest of an albinistic Red-headed Woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*). On 13 May 1977, M. Rogers discovered the partially albino Red-head (Fig. 1A) on the campus of the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. Its nest was in a partially dead sugarberry (*Celtis laevigata*) that stood in a parking lot 20 m from the nearest other tree. Live limbs of the tree extended to about 13 m, but the nest cavity was 8 m up in an 8.4-m dead stub of approximately 12 cm diameter. The albino bird's mate was normally pigmented (Fig. 1B).

When viewed with a 20× spotting scope at 20 m, the albino could be seen to have some color in primaries 4 through 9. The base of the bill was pink, the tip darker. The feet and legs were pink, though the eyes appeared dark. There were conspicuous black areas in the scapular region and along the rachis of the central rectrices. Other rectrices appeared nearly white and were quite worn. The albino bird's head was red, but when compared to that of its mate it appeared to be slightly pinker, as if the bases of the red feathers were whiter than normal.

Jackson climbed to the nest on 27 May and removed the three nestlings for banding. Their weight and physical development indicated their age to be approximately 8 days (Jackson 1970, Niobrara, Annual Report of the University of Kansas Museum of Natural History, 1968–69: 3–10). All three appeared normally pigmented.

On 27 May, Jackson and Schardien captured the normally-pigmented adult as it flew from the nest. The cloaca was swollen, suggesting that the normal bird was a male. On 28 May Jackson and Schardien found that the normally-pigmented bird was the parent roosting in the nest at night, further substantiating that it was the male and the albino the female (see Jackson 1977, Living Bird 15: 205–221).

During nest watches on 24 and 27 May and 5, 16, and 19 June we observed 16 of 42 feeding visits (38%) by the albino bird. This is within the range of variation found for the relative attentiveness of the

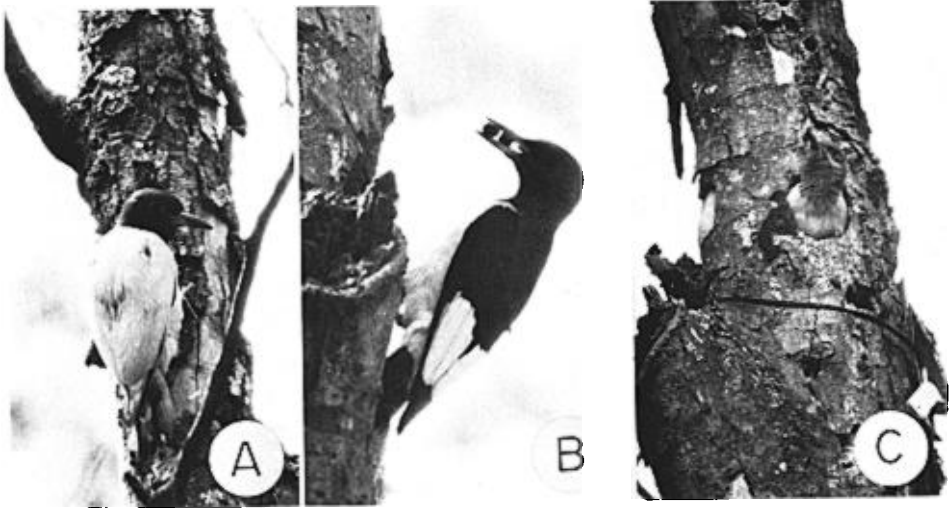


Fig. 1. (A) A female albino Red-headed Woodpecker, (B) her normal mate, and (C) a normally-pigmented nestling in the nest cavity just prior to fledging.

sexes in Red-headed Woodpeckers (Jackson 1976, *Condor* 78: 67-76). Both the albino and normal adult removed fecal sacs from the nest. Other behavior of the albino seemed typical for the species. Jackson and Schardien observed the albino flycatching from a perch on a utility pole and using the top of the pole as a "chopping block" at which to dismember its prey.

At least one of the nestlings fledged successfully on the morning of 19 June. This and the other young had juvenal plumage that seemed normal for the species.

We visited the site of this nest again in 1978, hoping to observe this unusual bird during another nesting attempt. Unfortunately the nest tree had been removed for a parking lot and we observed no Red-headed Woodpeckers in the vicinity.—Received 5 September 1978, accepted 26 November 1978.

### Density and Volume Corrections of Eggs of Seven Passerine Birds

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Few measurements of the density of fresh eggs of passerine birds are recorded in the literature and, as far as I know, none showing the loss of density during the egg-laying period. The eggs used in this study were from nests located near Merrickville, about 50 km south of Ottawa, Ontario. Each clutch was probably laid by a different female. The Barn Swallow nests were in a single barn; the Red-winged Blackbird nests in three small marshes. (Scientific names of all species are given in Table 2.) The other nests were scattered over an area of about 6 km<sup>2</sup>. The six Starling eggs were found on a recently mown lawn. The five Brown-headed Cowbird eggs were from four well-separated host nests and therefore probably laid by four different females.

The eggs were weighed, while sheltered from the wind in a transparent acrylic cylinder, with 10-g and 5-g Pesola balances reading to 0.2 g and 0.1 g, respectively. Length and breadth of the eggs were measured with dial calipers reading to 0.1 mm. To measure density, the eggs were placed in a solution of common salt (NaCl), the density of which was adjusted by the addition of fresh water and saturated salt solution until the eggs were just waterborne. The density of the solution was then measured with a hydrometer, graduated to 0.002 g·cm<sup>-3</sup> and readable to 0.0005. Care was taken to mix the salt solution thoroughly and to see that the egg and hydrometer bulb floated at about the same level. As the egg and the hydrometer were in the same solution, the readings were not affected by