

is of course desirable and would support this view.—ROBERT A. NORRIS and DAVID W. JOHNSTON, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, January 25, 1952.*

Wren-tit Attempts Copulation with Begging Fledgling.—The resemblance between the posture of a begging passerine fledgling and that of an adult female during courtship, has often been noted. Both the begging fledgling and the adult female assume a crouching position accompanied by a fluttering of the wings. The function of the posture in the fledgling is to release the feeding response of the adults. In the female the posture is usually indicative of a readiness to copulate. In many species the male of a pair feeds the crouched, fluttering female. This act of "courtship feeding" has been discussed by Lack (*Auk*, 57, 1940:169-178) and by Armstrong (*Bird Display and Behaviour*, 1947: 43-50). Courtship feeding may precede or accompany copulation.

On June 5, 1951, an adult Wren-tit (*Chamaea fasciata*) accompanied by two begging fledglings came to a feeding tray less than 10 feet from my point of observation. The adult fed each fledgling twice, then mounted one of the crouching, fluttering fledglings in copulatory position. It remained on the fledgling's back for approximately 2 seconds before hopping off to resume feeding the youngsters.

This observation lends support to the belief that the pre-copulatory display of the female in many passerines is truly similar to the begging display of the fledgling. Both postures seem capable of releasing copulatory behavior in the Wren-tit.—CHARLES G. SIBLEY, *San Jose State College, San Jose, California, January 15, 1952.*

Tyrannus melancholicus in Marin County, California.—On October 21, 1951, near Drake's Bay in Marin County, California, my attention was attracted by a large flycatcher flying from a fence post. As it turned and showed a yellow belly, I recognized it as a kingbird; and since it did not have white lateral tail edges, I assumed that it was a Cassin Kingbird (*Tyrannus vociferans*), which in itself would be noteworthy at this location. Therefore, without detailed study, the bird was collected; but it proved to be the second specimen taken in California of the Tropical Kingbird, *Tyrannus melancholicus*. It was a female; and although the skull was completely double-roofed, the lack of any brightly colored crown feathers and of emarginations of the primaries, the extensive buff edges on the wing coverts and smaller ones on the rectrices, and the small ovary all indicate that it was a bird of the year. On the basis of its short length of wing (right, 106.5 mm.; left, 108.3), it seems referable to *T. m. occidentalis*, and it agrees well in coloration with a series of this race in the collection of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology except for a few clear yellow feathers mid-ventrally in the yellowish olive-green pectoral band which is also somewhat darkened laterally. Other measurements of this specimen, now M. V. Z. no. 124640, are as follows: tail, 91.4 mm.; exposed culmen, 20.7; bill from nostril, 17.5; and tarsus, 19.9.

This kingbird had apparently been foraging from fence posts at the edge of a long, disked stubble field some 100-150 yards wide which lies between grass- and low, shrub-covered hills. A strip of 20-30 foot red alders and somewhat shorter willow thickets separates the field from the hills on the east, whereas only the road and a few feet of weeds lie between the fence line and the hills on the west. The stomach of this bird was crammed with the hard parts of insects among which the orders Orthoptera (Acrididae), Coleoptera and Hymenoptera were identified. It was moderately fat and weighed 43.6 grams.

Previous casual occurrences of this species northward from its normal range in southern Arizona, southern Texas and tropical America are summarized, and one subspecific identification corrected, by Slipp (*Auk*, 59, 1942:310-312). Noting that the then known far northward vagrant occurrences were all coastwise (3 Pacific, 1 Atlantic), Slipp suggested that "in the juvenile males (and, perhaps in both sexes) of at least two of the named races of this species there is a tendency to wander northward along the ocean coasts in fall and winter." The specimen taken by Russell (*Condor*, 50, 1948:90) in Berkeley, California, on October 1, 1947, also an immature judging from the plumage, and the one here reported are females. On the same date as this Berkeley occurrence, an individual of this species was seen by Gale Monson (*Condor*, 51, 1949:264) on the Arizona-California line above Topock, Arizona. It would seem that northward wandering vagrants of this species might be fairly commonplace in October and November, at least toward the Pacific coast.—HOWARD L. COGSWELL, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, November 15, 1951.*