

down on both our visits. Breckenridge (*op. cit.*), however, doubts the importance of down as insulation for Wood Duck eggs during periods when the hen is absent.

Fourth, Wood Ducks' ducklings leave the nest in response to auditory cues learned during the brooding period immediately after hatching (Gottlieb, *J. Comp. Phys. Psych.* 56:86-91, 1963). Similar behavior undoubtedly prompts the departure of young Tree Ducks, but this, too, remains conjectural. Nonetheless, the entire brood of both species left the nesting box, suggesting that the cues for departure may not be species-specific in cavity-nesting waterfowl. The

survival value for all cavity-nesting ducklings which hatch in a host-parasite situation seems obvious. Weller (*op. cit.*) should be consulted for a full listing of interspecific egg parasitism among waterfowl, including cavity-nesting species.

We are indebted to Clarence Cottam for his review of this manuscript, and to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and to the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Foundation for their financial support of the senior and junior authors, respectively, during the summer of 1967.

Accepted for publication 7 December 1967.

## THE HIGH FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE OF THE VESTIGIAL CLAW IN *COLINUS VIRGINIANUS VIRGINIANUS*

WILLIAM G. GEORGE and GARY M. BROWN

Department of Zoology  
Southern Illinois University  
Carbondale, Illinois 62901

Few statements in the literature furnish exact data, based on large samples, of the frequency of occurrence of the vestigial claw on the pollex of avian species. Recently, while attempting to determine the presence or absence of specialized feathers associated with vestigial structures, we examined 181 specimens of the eastern race of the Bobwhite (*Colinus v. virginianus*). The sample consisted of male and female adults and subadults; all were collected in nature in southern Illinois excepting a single pen-raised individual.

We found the claw in both wings of 166 specimens; in the remaining 14, one wing displayed the claw, the other not, but in every such instance there

existed a clear indication of the former presence of the claw, its loss probably having been caused by shot damage or handling.

Claw shape varied from curved to straight; claw length (cord measurement) ranged from 2.4 mm to 5.5 mm, averaging 3.0 mm in a group of 25 specimens examined at random. Our figures differ from those obtained from stocked birds in California by Fisher (*Amer. Midl. Nat.* 23:239, 1940). Examining 15 birds, in all of which the claw was present, he obtained measurements ranging from 5.0 mm to 6.0 mm.

In several cases claw length, and to some extent claw shape, differed between the wings of the same specimen. In the pen-raised bird, for example, one claw measured 2.5 mm, the other 5.5 mm.

Evidence of the presence or absence of coverts that conceal the primitive claw will be given in a later paper, along with information on the frequency of claw occurrence in other Bobwhite races and in additional species.

We acknowledge the cooperation of Willard D. Klimstra, who provided most of the specimens.

Present address of Brown is: School of Dentistry, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee 37916.

Accepted for publication 21 December 1967.

## FIRST SPECIMEN RECORDS OF THE DUNLIN AND THE SNOWY PLOVER IN IDAHO

GLENN R. DOWNING and EDSON FICHTER

The Museum and Department of Biology  
Idaho State University  
Pocatello, Idaho 83201

From about 10:00 to 11:00, on 30 April 1966, an ornithology class from Idaho State University observed a flock of five Dunlins (*Erolia alpina*) on the northwest shore of American Falls Reservoir four miles east of Aberdeen, Bingham County, Idaho. The birds were foraging both in and out of the shallow water of a small inlet immediately adjacent to a nesting colony of California Gulls (*Larus californicus*). Four of the Dunlins were apparently still in breeding plumage, with the distinctive patch across the belly solidly black; the belly of the fifth individual was spotted with sooty.

We found what were probably the same five birds later in the day, at which time efforts to secure a specimen were unsuccessful. On the following morning we collected a female Dunlin (one of three of

that species seen) and one male and one female Snowy Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*) at the same inlet. These specimens (Idaho State University Museum 6565, 6566, and 6567, respectively), to the best of our knowledge, are the first specimen records of the occurrence of these two species in Idaho. In view of what is already known about their distribution (A.O.U. 1957: 168, 199-200), their presence in the Snake River drainage is not surprising, especially in the case of the Snowy Plover, which has been included on the hypothetical list for Idaho.

The water of the reservoir had begun to recede from its high level for the year, exposing a narrow, seeping mudflat at the head and along one side of the inlet. Ten species of shorebirds (about one-third of the species known to occur in Idaho) were seen on or near the mudflat during four visits from 30 April to 3 May; no Dunlins were seen on the last visit.

A year later (21 April 1967) Kenneth W. Pitcher and Fichter saw a Dunlin about 12 airline miles northeast of the Aberdeen locality; it was in the company of 15 to 20 shorebirds, representing six species, which were feeding and loafing in a shoal of a backwater of the Snake River.

Accepted for publication 14 November 1967.