

## GENERAL NOTES

**Unusual Feeding Behavior of a Hairy Woodpecker.**—While conducting an investigation of foraging behavior and resource partitioning in Downy (*Picoides pubescens*) and Hairy (*P. villosus*) woodpeckers last winter, I noticed a peculiar behavior in the Hairy.

A female was foraging on cattails (*Typha* sp.) in an old elm marsh, surrounded by mixed deciduous hardwood/conifer lowlands. The bird flew to one cattail shaft, perched on its side, and pecked a few times at the plant. She then flew to another plant, perched on its side as before, and again pecked into the plant. She flew off and landed on yet another plant, perched, and pecked in much the same fashion as in the previous two accounts. The date of this foraging behavior was 10 March 1978.

I know of no literature citations indicating this plant as a foraging site, and no behavior of this sort has appeared in the literature. The stalks on which the woodpecker was perched were dried and above the water level. Often lepidopteran larvae such as *Synclita occidentalis* are found in the stalks of such plants as cattails and water lilies (*Nymphaea* sp.), but usually under water (Curry, unpubl. data). It was also too early in the season for nymphs to be emerging—offering little support to the hypothesis that the bird was perhaps feeding on the nymphs that climb the stems of aquatic vegetation to make their final molt and fly away as adults. This unusual behavior can be explained by assuming that *P. villosus* might have been taking terrestrial arthropods that were crawling up the cattail stalk. Normal foraging sites for these birds are Maples (*Acer* sp.), White Birch (*Betula pendula*), White Pine (*Pinus strobus*), and other trees (Kilham, L. *Wilson Bull.*, **77**: 134–145, 1965.).—JEFFREY A. CHAMBERS, *Department of Biology, Central Michigan University, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858*. Received 14 November 1978, accepted 15 May 1979.

**Group Adherence in Emigration of Common Terns.**—In a series of papers on the population ecology of the Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*), O. L. Austin (*Bird-Banding*, **22**: 1, 1951) described a phenomenon he called group adherence, meaning that when breeding birds were displaced from a traditional breeding site by any of a number of factors, they were likely to move as a unit, either joining another existing colony or pioneering at a new site. While studying the dispersal of Common Terns forced from part of the colony at Cedar Beach, Long Island, New York (see Gochfeld, *Kingbird*, **26**: 63, 1976) during construction of a sewage outfall pipeline, I gathered evidence that supported, in part, the concept of group adherence.

On 8 July 1977, a pair of incubating terns was nest-trapped as part of a group of birds nesting on the proposed construction site. In 1978, no birds nested on the cleared site, but on 22 June 1978, these two birds were captured on adjacent nests, about 2.2 m apart, at West End Beach, 19 km to the west. Another bird taken on a nest about 5 m away had also been banded in 1977 on the construction site, within 20 m of the above-mentioned pair. Of the  $450 \pm 25$  pairs that had nested on the construction site in 1977, 60% had been banded, and in 1978 some of these birds were recaptured elsewhere at Cedar Beach, at a new salt marsh colony 6 km away, at West End Beach, and at Breezy Point, Brooklyn, about 70 km to the west. Thus the displaced birds had gone their separate ways. Nonetheless the discovery of three birds close together at another colony is an example of group adherence on a small scale. This shows that a pair of terns might emigrate together as part of a group, settle within a short distance of each other, but pair with other birds. If pairing were a function of two birds returning to the same territory in successive years and thus finding their previous mate, it would not be surprising to find a realignment when birds emigrating together settled in a new colony. However, Austin (*Bird-Banding*, **18**: 1, 1947) found that it was rare to find a marked tern with a new mate when its former mate was also found. The outcome of the 1977 mating of this pair was not known, and it is possible that mate change might occur as a consequence of reproductive failure.

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