

with its talons but did not capture a fish. It landed on an old piling nearby but did not resume fishing.—DWIGHT G. SMITH, ARNOLD DEVINE, AND DEBBIE DEVINE, *Biology Department, Southern Connecticut State University, New Haven, Connecticut 06515*. Received 23 Aug. 1982; accepted 28 Oct. 1982.

A Yearling Helper with a Tufted Titmouse Brood.—On 4 May 1979 I banded and color-banded 7 Tufted Titmouse (*Parus bicolor*) nestlings in a nest box in Nashville, Tennessee. The female parent, "Orange," had been banded and color-banded as an HY (hatching year) bird 30 September 1977. The male, marked only with a numbered metal band, was not recaptured and identified. The young fledged successfully and 2 took up winter residence in the home woods and were often observed with their mother and another banded adult. One of the young, "Yellow," was captured 8 times and sighted 15 times from June 1979 through May 1980.

On 20 April 1980 I captured Orange who was incubating 6 eggs in a nest box 80 m from her 1979 nest. By 5 May Orange and her mate, a titmouse wearing only an aluminum band, were industriously feeding small young. At this point I noticed that Yellow was constantly near the nest. Often the first to fly down, Yellow gave alarm and scolding calls and was quickly joined by the parents who interrupted their feeding to fuss when I approached. I limited my appearances near the box because of this interruption and the fear that protracted calling would alert predators. I did not see Yellow feed the nestlings. The parents paid little attention to Yellow and I observed no acts of aggression toward the yearling titmouse.

On 12 May I banded the 6 nestlings while Green flew repeatedly at me, Yellow scolded, and Orange remained out of sight. I then netted the 2 parents. Orange possessed a shrinking brood patch, while the male, identified now by a green band, had a large bare, but smooth and unmarred, abdominal patch. "Green" had been banded as an HY bird 10 September 1977. Yellow was captured on 20 and 21 May 1980 and also showed a smooth bare abdomen.

By 18 May the young had fledged, and after a few days I located 4 or more of them attended by the 3 adults in the middle canopy of the woods 40 m from the nest box. All of the titmice fussed loudly at my appearance. Orange and Yellow fed young birds twice and Green, although he carried a beakful of small caterpillars for a time, swallowed them himself in order to vocalize.

From 8–10 June the three adult titmice were seen with begging young which Orange and Yellow fed. On 30 June Yellow ate alone at the feeder while the young picked in the trees but did not beg. Yellow was not seen again. Orange disappeared in late fall of 1980 and was found again on 23 April 1982 raising a titmouse brood with a new mate 0.5 km from her nest of 1980. Green remained the dominant male Tufted Titmouse of the yard and nested successfully in 1981 and 1982. I observed no helper.

Helpers at the nest are uncommon in the genus *Parus* (Perrins, British Tits, Collins, London, 1979:80, 160). Davis (Auk 95:767, 1978) reports an extra female feeding Tufted Titmouse young; a relationship to the breeding pair was not established. Brackbill (Auk 87:522–536, 1970) describes a yearling helper, believed to be a male, feeding young and carrying fecal sacs at the nest of his mother who was mated to a different male. In that case the new male titmouse attempted to drive off the helper.

Because both Yellow's mother and the male titmouse tolerated Yellow, I believe that both adults of the nesting pair in 1980 were Yellow's parents in 1979. Instances of Tufted Titmice retaining the same mates for 3 years are known (Middleton, Bird-Banding 20: 151–152, 1949). That Green has been a permanent resident of the area since 1977 is also indicated by his capture 15 times during 1977–1982. Yellow appears to have been an unmated yearling helper of unknown sex assisting its mother, and possibly both parents, with the next year's brood.

I thank David Pitts for his interest and suggestions in preparation of this note.—ANN T. TARBELL, 6033 Sherwood Drive, Nashville, Tennessee 37215. Received 26 Mar. 1982; accepted 15 Nov. 1982.