

Communications

To the editor:

I read with interest the article by Bollinger and Bowes (1973) attributing the "kicker" song to the Virginia Rail (*Rallus limicola*), and thus supporting an earlier report by Reynard and Harty (1968). Your readers will no doubt be interested in a similar article by E. M. Callin (1968) documenting several attempts to identify the source of "kicker" songs in Saskatchewan and Manitoba from 1961 to 1964. The search, involving such well known prairie observers as Margaret Belcher, Ralph Carson and Fred Lahrman of Regina, Saskatchewan and the late John ("Jack") Lane of Brandon, Manitoba, as well as Callin himself, Oscar M. Root, and Joseph A. Hagar, culminated in Hagar's observation on July 6, 1964 at 0400 of a Virginia Rail giving the "kicker" song in a marsh near Ft. Qu'Appelle, Sask. Not only does this predate the two above observations, but also Callin, in a footnote at the end of the article, quotes a letter from Hagar citing additional reports, one dated from New Jersey in 1962.

Thus, there are now several independent observations identifying this rail as at least sometimes the author of the mystery song.

Since the above letter was first written an additional important review of this subject has been published by Reynard (1974), in which he also corrects bird recordings of rails.

Literature Cited

- Bollinger, R. C., and E. Bowes. 1973. Another chapter in the "Ornithological Mystery Story." *American Birds* 27:741-742.
- Callin, E. M. 1968. Vocalizations of the Virginia Rail: a mystery solved. *Blue Jay* 26:75-77.
- Reynard, G. B. 1974. Some vocalizations of the Black, Yellow, and Virginia rails. *Auk* 91:747-756.
- Reynard, G. B., and S. T. Harty. 1968. Ornithological 'Mystery' song given by male Virginia Rail. *Cassinia* 50:3-8.

—Martin K. McNicholl, Department of Zoology, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2E1, Canada.

To the editor:

I have found one slip in the list of introductions (Introductions, Transplants, and Invaders, *Am. Birds* 29:923-6, 1975) which could be confusing. On page 925, near the bottom of the first column is the Common Waxbill, *E. astrild*. This should go near the top of the second column on the same page, adjacent to the Red-eared Waxbill.

I have compared the list with the new *Field Guide to the Birds of Southeast Asia* by King and Dickinson and find only six species in which the difference in common names is significant. At a future date I will comment on these in a list of amendments and additions.

For your information, these authors refer to *Lonchura ferruginosa*. It is either a synonym or a sub-specific name under *L. malacca*, which we put down as the Black-headed Mannikin.

—Charles H. Blake, Box 613,
Hillsborough, NC 27278



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