

GENERAL NOTES

**The American Bittern in Puerto Rico.**—On November 14, 1947, a female specimen of the American Bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*) was brought to me by Mr. Luis Santos, who had killed the bird near a small ciénaga northwest of the town of Añasco, Puerto Rico, densely covered with *Typha* associations and other thick clumps of plants typical of swampy areas. According to Mr. Santos, the bittern was feeding on the mudflats south of the swamp. The specimen (No. 918) is on deposit at the Institute of Tropical Agriculture, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico.

As far as I am aware, this constitutes the only recent record of the occurrence of the American Bittern in Puerto Rico. The last record known was that of Danforth (1925. "Birds of the Cartagena Lagoon," *Jour. Dept. Agric. Porto Rico*, 10:46), who flushed one bird in Cartagena Lagoon on the southwestern corner of the island, on November 30, 1923.

Bond (1945. "Check-list of Birds of the West Indies," p. 10) records the species as wintering southward to Panama, and: "Not uncommon winter resident in Cuba. Also recorded from Puerto Rico, Grand Cayman, Swan Island and from the Bahamas (New Providence). Should also be found in Hispaniola and Jamaica, though records of its occurrence on these islands are unsatisfactory."

Wetmore (1927. "The Birds of Porto Rico and the Virgin Islands," *N.Y. Acad. Sci., Sci. Surv. of Porto Rico and the Virgin Islands*, 9:303) states that the American Bittern is a migrant straggler in Puerto Rico and cites three definite records (1873, 1921, and "a skin in the collection of Blanco"), as well as the 1923 record of Danforth.—VENTURA BARNES, JR., *Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, Department of Agriculture and Commerce, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico.*

**Anting by some Costa Rican birds.**—Within recent years, the curious phenomenon of "anting" has received considerable attention from ornithologists, and numerous observations have been published, especially in the *Wilson Bulletin* and the *Auk*. In view of this widespread interest, it seems desirable to put on record a few instances of anting that have come to my attention in Costa Rica during the last dozen years. My first observation was made at a time when most of us had never heard about anting, and I shall give it as I recorded it in my journal on October 28, 1936: "Today at noon the pair of Buff-throated Saltators, *Saltator maximus* [a big, thick-billed, olive-green member of the finch family], that frequently come into my yard, flew into the lemon tree in front of the cabin, and one of them behaved most unusually. It perched on a slender ascending branch supporting a grayish nest inhabited by fat brown ants of medium size and began to pick off the ants with its bill. It held its right wing extended in such a fashion that the primary feathers shielded the side of its breast and belly, and every time that it picked up an ant, it rubbed its bill rapidly against these feathers. Then it seemed to eat the ant, but of this I could not make sure, for the creatures were too small for me to distinguish them in the bill. Once it climbed up very close to the nest to pick the ants from its surface, and here a leaf interfered with its reaching its wing, which was held forward as before. As a result, the bird rubbed its bill against the leaf instead of against its flight feathers. Was this rubbing against wing or leaf for the purpose of killing the ant?"

My next observation was made more than nine years later, and the actor in this instance was a little, sharp-billed flycatcher, *Pipromorpha oleaginea*. On November 7, 1945, while walking along the creek in front of my house, I found a lone male (I could tell the sex by the yellow corners of the mouth) in a little tree growing on the bank. He plucked a small, dark object from the foliage; then holding it in the tip of his bill, he rubbed it along the inner surface of the remiges. As he did this, his wing was slightly opened and his tail bent forward