

species I have examined: *H. flavipes*, *H. thoracicus*, *H. poicilotis*, and *H. pectoralis*. It would seem that this latiplantar, quasi-exaspidean condition is best interpreted as a modification of the oscine acutiplantar condition. An attempt to divide *Hylophilus* into two genera would necessitate setting arbitrary limits and would be impractical.

In this case, an attempt to use tarsal scutellation as a "key character" for classification fails and recalls that Ridgway also had trouble (1907. *U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull.*, 50:336) when attempting to use the variations in the tarsal envelope for arranging the members of the Tyrannidae. He wrote, "... they have disappointed me ... they seem of little value beyond the definition of genera (even sometimes failing here!) or minor supergeneric groups; indeed, it has been found that each of them is more or less variable within what appears to be proper generic limits."—A. L. RAND, *Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago 5, Illinois, December 29, 1958.*

"Foot-paddling" feeding behavior in a Semi-palmated Sandpiper.—On August 5, 1958, I made the following observation on a mud flat in Newburyport Harbor, eastern Massachusetts. Together with several other species of shore birds, a number of Semi-palmated Sandpipers (*Ereunetes pusillus*) were feeding approximately 20 yards from my position on the edge of the flat. As the incoming tide slowly covered the mud, a number of small, shallow pools began to form, and the sandpipers were observed to probe in these pools as well as in the surrounding mud. I focussed my binoculars on one individual which had stopped momentarily to preen. Shortly afterward, this bird waded into a small pool about two feet in diameter, and began to "foot-paddle." With its body held horizontally, bill pointed down, the bird began alternately to lift and depress its legs very rapidly. The entire body of the bird moved rhythmically with the alternating motions of the feet and tarsi. The bird would paddle for about ten seconds, peer at the surface of the water for a moment, then stab rapidly. The movements of the bill were stabs, not probes in the mud. Three such stabs appeared to be successful in securing prey, since the bird made brief swallowing movements after each stab. The food secured by the use of "foot-paddling" was not identified. The entire behavior lasted three minutes, and it appeared to be terminated by the incoming tide flooding the temporary pool.

A cursory review of the literature revealed no mention of this behavior for the Semi-palmated Sandpiper, although similar feeding techniques have been observed in other species of sandpipers.—ANDREW J. MEYERRIECKS, *Hatheway School of Conservation Education, Drumlin Farm, South Lincoln, Massachusetts, September 25, 1958.*

Tarsal oiling by a banded Fox Sparrow.—On April 2, 1958, I observed a Fox Sparrow (*Passerella iliaca*) anoint its tarsi after manipulating its uropygial gland. Similar behavior of a Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*) has been described by Whitaker (1957. *Wilson Bull.*, 69:179-180), apparently the only other published report of this behavior. My observations were made at the Drumlin Farm Sanctuary near Lincoln, Massachusetts, where I was studying the morphology and sequence of maintenance activities of emberizines upon release from banding. This Fox Sparrow was banded with one aluminum band, inspected for fat and molt, measured, weighed, and released at about 12:45 p.m. Maintenance activities, such as preening and shaking, are given quite readily after banding, and it is assumed that handling and ruffling the feathers during the process accentuate exteroceptive stimuli which release these motions.

Oiling was performed three times, once on each leg after manipulation of the uropygial gland, and once on the unbanded leg after preening the breast. The actual oiling movements were not elaborate. Having just manipulated the preen gland, the Fox