

Notes on color aberrancies in the Rio Grande wild Turkey.—The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department conducted trapping and banding programs during February and March 1960–63, in order to mark wild Turkeys of the Rio Grande subspecies (*Meleagris gallopavo intermedia* Sennett) while they were concentrated in traditional winter roosting areas.

Trapping was done in three major roosting areas in southeastern Sutton County, Texas, called the Ross roost, the Wade roost, and the Stewart roost, respectively. Each of these roosts represented a separate wintering concentration of Turkeys.

The winter population of the Ross roost was estimated at between 500–700 Turkeys during the winter of 1960–61, in which season we carried out the only winter trapping that was done at this roost. Two white Turkey hens were seen repeatedly around this roost during February and March 1961. These two hens were solid white with tarsi and eyes of normal coloration, and were members of two separate feeding flocks. In the larger of these flocks four light smoky gray hens with normal marking patterns were often seen. Observations made around this roost in 1961–62 revealed the presence of two white hens. One white hen was seen during the winter of 1962–63.

The winter population of the Wade roost was estimated at 600–800 Turkeys during the winter of 1960–61; 500–700 during 1961–62; and 300–400 during 1962–63. Three white hens, two in one feeding flock and one in another, were seen often during February and March of 1960 and 1961. In March 1961, a white hen was trapped with a group of approximately 30 hens. Three of the hens trapped were young of the previous hatch and were smoky gray in color with normal coloration patterns. These birds were marked with colored leg markers (Thomas, J. W., and R. G. Marburger, *J. Wildl. Mgmt.*, in press) and released. Two white hens, including the marked one, were seen around the Wade roost during the winter of 1962–63. At least one of the marked smoky gray Turkeys was also seen.

The winter populations of the Stewart roost were estimated at 600–800 during the winter of 1960–61; 500–700 in 1961–62; and 200–300 in 1962–63. One white hen was observed around the roost in March 1961. A white hen was trapped during March 1962 and retrapped in March 1963. At least two smoky gray hens with normal coloration patterns were seen in March 1961.

These white Turkeys and smoky gray Turkeys with normal coloration patterns were believed to be natural offspring of the wild Turkeys as there were no flocks of white domestic Turkeys in this general area. The weight and body conformation of trapped white and smoky gray hens were comparable to normally colored wild Turkeys. Field observations of other white or gray hens indicated that size and body conformation were indistinguishable from normally colored wild Turkeys. It was not known if the smoky gray Turkeys were offspring of the white hens, but it was interesting to note that the majority of the smoky gray hens observed were seen in feeding flocks containing white hens.

Interviews with the owners of the ranch property where the roosts were located, Mr. Bill Wade of Sonora and Mr. Gordon Stewart of Junction, indicated that they had seen occasional wild white Turkey hens in the wintering flocks as long as they had been familiar with the area, which in the case of Mr. Stewart was from the 1920's.

Neither Mr. Wade or Mr. Stewart could ever remember having seen a white male. In the course of work we never saw a white or smoky gray male Turkey.

It was our opinion that the white Turkeys were noticeably wilder and more alert than their normally colored flock mates. This noticeable difference in wildness might be

accounted for by the increased danger of being without protective coloration. Those white birds that survive might of necessity have been more wild and alert.

Albinism in both sexes of the eastern wild Turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo sylvestris*) has been previously noted (Bailey, R. W., 1955. *J. Wildl. Mgmt.*, 19:408). "Smoke gray" aberrancies in *M. g. osceola*, similar to those described here, have been noted (Williams, L. E., Jr., 1964. *J. Wildl. Mgmt.*, 28:148-152).

This note is a contribution of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Pittman-Robertson Project W-62-R.—JACK WARD THOMAS, Llano, Texas; CALVIN VAN HOOZER, Sonora, Texas; AND RODNEY C. MARBURGER, Kerrville, Texas, 28 January 1964.

Roosting habits of Red-bellied Woodpeckers.—During 1962, I observed the roosting habits of 15 Red-bellied Woodpeckers (*Centurus carolinus*) in the vicinity of Carbondale, Illinois and these are the results.

1. Although adult birds roosted singly in cavities, juveniles for at least the first few nights after fledging roosted in the open. As in other members of the genus *Centurus* on which information is available (Skutch, 1943. *Sci. Mon.*, 56:358-364), newly fledged birds must learn to seek roosting cavities by themselves.

2. Individual birds generally spent several minutes looking out of their roost cavities before leaving in the morning and frequently did the same in the evening before dropping from sight.

3. Generally upon leaving an excavation, and for several minutes before going to roost in the evening, individual birds uttered the location call (the *cha* note; Kilham, 1961. *Wilson Bull.*, 73:237-254).

4. Both sexes changed their roost cavities frequently, but it was not uncommon for a given bird to return at a later date and roost in a previously abandoned excavation.

5. With one exception, males roosted in cavities being excavated for nesting purposes; and in all cases roosted in such cavities throughout the incubation and most of the nestling periods. A given male abandoned the nest cavity for roosting purposes one or two nights prior to fledging of the young.

6. Although a surplus of excavations was dug during the breeding season, both sexes excavated cavities outside this period. These latter cavities were shallower than the excavations used for nesting purposes.

7. As would be expected, the times of leaving the roost hole and going to roost were coordinated with sunrise and sunset. The maximum, minimum, and mean roosting times, using as reference points civil sunrise and sunset times (Hansen, 1962. "The World Almanac." New York World Telegram and The Sun, N. Y., pp. 456-470), are given in Table 1. Only three periods of the year were chosen for comparison; winter (22 December to 21 March), spring (22 March to 21 June), and fall (24 September to 21 December). The roosting behavior of this woodpecker was not observed during the summer months. These periods were selected because they corresponded to changes in sun time; if Red-bellied Woodpeckers responded to factors other than the sun, these responses would be reflected in the changes of roosting time in relation to sunrise and sunset. Although females tended to arise earlier than males, there were no statistically significant differences between means of the times the males and females left their roost holes on winter, spring, and fall mornings. However, an analysis of variance