

followed the ingestion of any solid food with water. It was supplied with fresh tap water to which salt was never added.

The appetite of the captive was enormous. Particularly relished were live or freshly killed insects (adult flies, maggots, small butterflies, and moths), chopped raw meat, boiled egg yolk, and cottage cheese. The cottage cheese was more readily accepted if slightly soured, and was consumed after other foods were eaten. The bird either nibbled on or totally ignored chopped salad greens, chopped fruit, egg white, and canned dog food.

This successful retention of a Northern Phalarope suggests that the species may prove hardy in captivity, and thus available for laboratory studies in behavior and physiology. (See also Johns, 1964. *Condor*, 66:449-455.)

I would make the following suggestions as to the equipment necessary for retention of phalaropes in captivity: (1) confinement area of at least 2 square feet per individual; (2) water for swimming and drinking; (3) apparatus to allow the necessary frequent cleaning of quarters; and (4) large amounts of fresh food, live or freshly killed, or prepared material of animal origin.—SANFORD R. LEFFLER, *Museum of Natural History, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas*. (Present address: 1398 Geneva Street, San Carlos, California.) 21 November 1964.

**Comparison of the sexual responses of Common Grackles to normal females and to mounts of soliciting females.**—The sexual behavior of the Common Grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula*) elicited by models is compared to studies of the natural reactions of the same population (Ficken, 1963. *Auk*, 80:52-72) with the purpose of emphasizing the necessity for caution in basing conclusions about normal behavior on observations using only abnormal conditions (e.g., mounts).

Stuffed female birds in the Soliciting posture were placed near colonies on grassy openings or tree limbs and the differences and similarities between reactions to the mount and the natural situation were recorded. Reactions to stuffed females in the Soliciting posture differed from all observed under natural conditions in the following ways: (1) more than one mounting occurred in a particular sequence (as many as 104 by a single male in 73 minutes); (2) males often mounted without preliminary display; (3) they pecked the model in various places; (4) they bit the model's head and bill; (5) they pulled out feathers; (6) they lifted the bill and wings of the mount with their bills; (7) females were attracted to the mount and occasionally directed Head Held displays at it; (8) males mounted the stuffed female when other males were standing a foot or two away; in fact, males mounted up to five times in a row although they were attacked each time by a nearby male; (9) two males defended the mount against other males by advancing toward the opponents with their bills lowered at an angle of about 15° below the horizontal and 15° to the side. *This posture was not seen in any other context.* It was associated with persistent and repeated advances toward other males up to 30 feet from the mount which invariably caused them to retreat. No nictitans blinking or eye closure common in threatening was associated with this, but rather the advancing bird seemed to "stare down" his opponents with his eye.

There were similarities between reactions to Soliciting female mounts and sexual interactions between wild males and females as follows: (1) the Head Down displays, mounting, and copulation were much the same; (2) females did not give any sexual responses to the model; (3) males defended the model against other males; (4) if a male mounted and another male was near, the other male was almost always attacked;

(5) more exaggerated Head Down displays were common when given toward a female on a limb but not when given to a female on the ground; (6) males did not threaten the stuffed female.

Thus, nine out of 15 reactions to female models were different from natural ones. This is in part due to the stationary position of the model in a constant strong Soliciting posture. Also, the males were presented with a continuous supernormal sexual stimulus during the period when their own females give only brief sexual responses, and are often aggressive toward the male when he directs precopulatory display (Head Down) toward them.

The two males which reacted by establishing a large territory around the model were completely dominant in this area. Moreover, they defended it by adopting a threat posture which was never seen in other situations but was more effective in eliciting withdrawal than any of their threat displays. Perhaps these were unmated males with unusually strong aggressive-sexual motivation.

Experiments in nature are the only way of obtaining proof of numerous important assumptions. However, the results of these tests point out the need to interpret them in the light of normal behavior. Moreover, the natural situation should be duplicated as closely as possible.—ROBERT W. FICKEN, *Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.* (Present address: *Department of Zoology, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland.*) 13 April 1965.

**Dickcissel in Utah.**—In recent years the Dickcissel (*Spiza americana*) has been reported from California and from several states west of the Rocky Mountains (California: Stager, 1949. *Condor*, 51:44; Northern Arizona: Bryant, 1952. *Condor*, 54:320; Nevada: Pulich and Gullion, 1953. *Condor*, 55:215; Western Colorado: Scott, 1957. *Audubon Field Notes*, 11:47). The four records above, plus the sight record in Utah noted below, were during the months of September and October. It is known that young birds disperse in many directions from their nesting grounds in the late summer and early fall. This random or vagrant migration (Wallace, 1963. "Introduction to Ornithology," Macmillan, New York, p. 260) might be one explanation for these scattered records.

On 1 October 1959 a sight record of five Dickcissels was reported in Salt Lake City (Scott, 1960. *Audubon Field Notes*, 14:60). Mr. Gleb Kashin, who saw the birds, stated that this "may be one of the first records for Utah." I have searched the literature and cannot find any earlier record. Thus, I consider the 1959 report as the first record of the Dickcissel in Utah.

On 25 May 1964 a Dickcissel was brought to me by a student who had seen the bird fly into the front window of a business establishment in Provo. This bird was an adult male (B.Y.U. No. 4752) with an ossified skull and enlarged testes (right  $7.2 \times 6.8$  mm, left  $9.4 \times 6.1$  mm). Although the feathers did not show signs of wear, the bird appeared to be in poor physical condition. There was no integumentary fat, and its weight of 19.6 grams was considerably less than the average weight of six individuals (33.5 grams) reported by Gross (1921. *Auk*, 38:15-17) from Illinois. The weight distinction could be due to the difference in the season since the Illinois birds were taken in August after nesting had been completed. Apparently the specimen I am reporting had just completed a migratory flight from its wintering locality in South America which could also account for the weight difference.—HERBERT H. FROST, *Department of Zoology and Entomology, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah*, 19 March 1965.