

TABLE 1
PERCENTAGE OCCURRENCE OF VARIOUS FOOD ITEMS IN CROPS AND GIZZARDS OF REDWINGS
AND COWBIRDS

Food item	Redwings (83)	Cowbirds (35)
grain sorghum (<i>Sorghum vulgare</i>)	93	71
ragweed (<i>Ambrosia</i>)	75	63
insects	36	63
sunflower (<i>Helianthus</i>)	36	49
johnson grass (<i>Sorghum halepense</i>)	24	49
foxtail (<i>Setaria</i>)	10	46
lamb's quarter (<i>Chenopodium</i>)	10	26
doveweed (<i>Croton</i>)	7	20
pigweed (<i>Amaranthus</i>)	10	14
sand dropseed (<i>Sporobolus</i>)	2	14
panic grass (<i>Panicum</i>)	5	6
<i>Paspalum</i>	0	14
smartweed (<i>Polygonum</i>)	1	0
grama grass (<i>Bouteloua</i>)	2	0
bush-clover (<i>Lespedeza</i>)	1	3
bluestem (<i>Andropogon</i>)	1	3
wheat (green) (<i>Triticum</i>)	0	3
miscellaneous and unidentified	11	3

Damage to grain sorghum off the refuge was not significant if local farmers were able to complete their harvest by the middle of October. However, blackbirds did cause considerable damage in some fields close to the refuge when the harvest was delayed by late fall rains. Blackbird populations did not start to build up rapidly until the latter part of October (Goddard, Unpubl. Ph.D. thesis Oklahoma State University, 1967) at which time their feeding was centered in refuge sorghum fields. These fields were available because portions of them had been left unharvested to provide food for wintering waterfowl. The availability of this grain sorghum as a food supply is probably responsible for the increased populations of migrant blackbirds in the area.

Blackbirds competed with ducks for sorghum and depletion of this food source may have been responsible for the daily duck feeding flights in late December and January. A shortage of food may have accounted for the large duck and blackbird population movements away from the refuge in January both years and may have resulted in a reduced duck use of the refuge during spring migration.—STEPHEN V. GODDARD, *Department of Biology, Wisconsin State University, River Falls, Wisconsin, 5 September 1968.*

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and Palm Warbler in Alaska.—On the afternoon of 28 June, 1967, together with my wife Helen and my daughter and son-in-law, Ann and Peter Wendt, I observed four Sharp-tailed Sandpipers (*Erolia acuminata*) on the tundra about three-quarters of a mile east of the lagoon bordering the airstrip at Kivalina,

Alaska. They were feeding on the mud at the edge of a small pond, together with some Golden Plovers (*Pluvialis dominica*), Semipalmated Sandpipers (*Ereunetes pusillus*), a Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) and a Long-billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*). We watched them at a range of 20 feet for almost an hour with 9× binoculars.

The birds bore only a superficial resemblance to the Pectoral Sandpiper (*Erolia melanotos*), in spite of the remark of Gabrielson and Lincoln (Birds of Alaska, 1959, p. 372) that the Sharp-tailed Sandpiper "is so much like the Pectoral Sandpiper in size and general appearance that it can easily be overlooked." The two species are about the same size, but the Sharp-tailed Sandpiper has a much ruder overall coloration. The top of the head was rich chestnut. The breast and flanks were spotted with rufous, and the belly washed with light buff, whereas the Pectoral Sandpiper has brown streaks on the breast which contrast sharply with the white belly and flanks. The back had a scaly appearance, much like Baird's Sandpiper (*Erolia bairdii*), but with much more rufous tone. The bill of the Sharp-tails appeared to be entirely black, not yellowish-green at the base as in the Pectoral, and the legs were darkish-green rather than yellowish-green.

The status of the Sharp-tailed Sandpiper in North America was recently summarized by Stuart Keith (Canadian Field-Nat., 81:197-198, 1967). All previous occurrences of the bird in Alaska have been between 19 August and 26 October, and there is no breeding record for North America. Keith, who found the bird common at Hooper Bay, Alaska in September 1956, comments (loc. cit.) on the curious fact that some Sharp-tailed Sandpipers apparently leave their regular fall migration route down the coast of eastern Asia and fly east to Alaska. This regular action is not paralleled by any other Asian bird and is hard to explain. On the other hand, were there an as yet undiscovered breeding ground of the Sharp-tailed Sandpiper in Alaska, the bird's presence on the coast in fall would be easily accounted for. The presence of four birds in breeding plumage on the tundra in late June might indicate that there is such a breeding ground waiting to be discovered.

On 6 July 1967, I saw a Palm Warbler (*Dendroica palmarum*) on the Kenai Peninsula, Alaska, about 10 miles east of Ninilchik at the gravel pit on Kingsley Road at the point where state road maintenance ends. It was in some low bushes along the road, together with some Orange-crowned Warblers (*Vermivora celata*). I clearly noted the bright chestnut cap, yellow eyestripe, yellowish throat, white underparts with chestnut streaking, and bright yellow under tail coverts. It was singing its somewhat weak song, reminiscent of that of a Chipping Sparrow (*Spizella passerina*), and wagging its tail in typical Palm Warbler fashion.

The Palm Warbler has not previously been reported from Alaska. The nearest recorded localities for the bird are southwestern Mackenzie and northeastern British Columbia, roughly 1,000 miles to the east of the Kenai Peninsula.—JOSEPH W. TAYLOR, 590 Allen's Creek Road, Rochester, New York 14618, 3 June 1968.

Responses of three avian species to burning.—Bobwhites (*Colinus virginianus*), Mourning Doves (*Zenaidura macroura*), and an American Woodcock (*Philohela minor*) were observed to respond positively to burning of the vegetation on a 2-acre field located on Stephen A. Forbes State Park, Marion County, Illinois. Vegetation on the field at the time of burning was an admixture of grasses and weedy forbs. Except for a narrow food patch planted 2 years previously, the field had been neither cropped nor pastured