

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

for about 5 years. Fertility was low and the soil acid. Vegetation tended to be rank although somewhat spotty.

At approximately 17:30 on 24 March 1967 fire was set around and through the field in a crude grid pattern with fire lines at approximate 100-foot intervals. There was little or no wind, dew was condensing on the vegetation, and the temperature was 50 to 55°F. Because of these conditions, and the somewhat scattered nature of the vegetation, burning proceeded slowly.

Shortly after the fire was set, about a dozen Mourning Doves, primarily in pairs, began to fly over the burning field and land on recently burned spots. The doves flew only 10 to 20 feet above the fire and landed that close to the flames, on the still warm ashes.

Three Bobwhites were heard giving covey calls, one east, one south, and one northwest, within 200-300 yards of the burning field. Two single and one pair of quail were observed to fly directly to the burning field and land within a few feet of the flames.

Earlier in the afternoon, on a different part of the study area, a covey of about 16 quail had been observed to flush less than 6 feet ahead of an earlier fire. When flushed, they flew approximately 80 yards and landed as a covey. There was neither covey disorganization nor calling behavior to indicate either alarm or fright exhibited by these birds. The following morning a covey, presumably the same one, was again flushed from this earlier burn; three more coveys were flushed from other new burns that morning. From these and other observations, we conclude that Bobwhites typically respond very quickly to burning and to newly burned fields.

Just before dark, when the 2-acre field first mentioned was about three-fourths burned, a single woodcock "peented" and made a song-flight from some brushy cover about 100 yards northeast of the field. He landed in the approximate area where he was first heard, "peented" again, and flew again. This time he flew directly to the burning field, circled once at an altitude of about 25 feet, and landed abruptly on a burned spot within 15 to 20 feet of flames which reached 2 to 3 feet into the air. After landing on the burn, he immediately initiated apparently normal courtship behavior, alternately peenting and making song-flights from the still burning field; he was still continuing these acts when we left the area at approximately 19:00.

The significance of these observations is that these three avian species appeared to respond positively rather than negatively to fire in their environment. These observations are in agreement with Komarek's hypothesis (Proc. Sixth Annual Tall Timbers Fire Ecology Conference, 6:143, 1967) that certain of our fauna may be fire adapted.

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Functional gonads in Peregrines.—Certain falconiform birds are considered to differ in their reproductive organs from birds of other orders in that the female may possess paired ovaries and reproductive tracts rather than the usual single left ovary (Van Tyne and Berger, *Fundamentals of ornithology*, Wiley and Sons, New York, 1959; A. J. Marshall, Ed., *Biology and comparative physiology of birds*, Vol. II, Academic Press, New York, 1961.). Van Tyne and Berger (op. cit.: 38) state that double ovaries is the usual condition in about 50 per cent of the individuals in the genera *Accipiter*, *Circus*, and *Falco*. Wood (*Auk*, 59:463, 1932) mentions some of the variability in the