

never collected the Sora, although they did attribute to this species a nest, on which basis they hypothesized the existence of a local breeding race. Although the egg measurements they list do fall within the size range reported for the Sora by Bent (U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull., 135:305, 1926) no such race has been discovered, and the measurements also match those given by the same authors (op. cit.) for *Laterallus exilis*.

From February to May 1965, I studied the ecology of a freshwater impoundment on the northeastern edge of the Caroni Swamp in Trinidad, and during this time I saw and heard many Soras. My observations were made only during the dry season. I first observed Soras foraging on exposed mudflats among the extensive beds of rushes (*Cyperus articulatus* and *Eleocharis mutata*), and later flushed them from these rushes wherever there was standing water. I occasionally flushed Soras from the dense stands of the emergent arum (*Montrachardia arborescens*) on the banks of the Caroni River itself, but I did not find them among the lower emergent vegetation such as water hyacinth (*Eichornia crassipes*) and a "morning glory" (*Ipomea aquatica*) which were frequented by the smaller Yellow-breasted Crake (*Porzana flaviventer*). This latter species, only recently reported from Trinidad, (French and French, Wilson Bull., 78:5-11, 1966), was also common in the marsh.

As the dry season progressed, more and more of the marsh was left without standing water, and the Soras moved into the remaining wet areas with taller vegetation (up to 1.2 meters) which they had previously shunned. The same shift in habitat was noted for the Common Gallinule (*Gallinula chloropus*), Wattled Jacana (*Jacana jacana*), and Stripe-backed Bittern (*Ixobrychus involucris*), but not for the Spotted Rail (*Rallus maculatus*) nor Yellow-breasted Crake which are perhaps more tolerant of drier conditions.

Several authors (Bond, Birds of the West Indies, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1961; Slud, Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist., 128:84, 1964; and Wetmore, Smithsonian Misc. Coll., 150:350, 1965) have indicated that the Sora is not very vocal on its wintering grounds, and Soras which I observed elsewhere in the West Indies were, indeed, silent. On Trinidad, however, I often heard spontaneous calls which I attributed to Soras. Two notes, a brief nasal *ka* and a more plaintive *peeyanh* ending with a rising inflection were similar to call notes I have heard from Soras on their breeding grounds. Once in April I heard the typical "whinny" call. The size of the wintering Sora population was estimated from the number of birds flushed while walking transects through the marsh, from the number of spontaneous calls, and from calls elicited by exploding firecrackers. I estimated that no fewer than 40 and perhaps 50 to 80 Soras were present in 26 hectares of marsh. Of the birds seen well two-thirds were in immature plumage. Soras were encountered on all 15 visits from 25 February to 24 April, but despite careful coverage none were found on 4 visits from 30 April to 6 May. The maximum daily count was 30 birds on 20 March, but this probably reflects unusually extensive coverage rather than an influx of northbound migrants from South America. No birds were collected so information on stomach contents is not available, but on one occasion a Sora was observed apparently feeding on small gastropods adhering to the emergent vegetation.—MICHAEL GOCHFELD, Department of Ornithology, American Museum of Natural History, New York, New York 10024, 16 March 1971.

Young Common and Roseate Terns learning to fish.—There is very little information in the literature on young terns learning to fish for themselves. Palmer (Proc. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist., 41:93, 1941) observed the young birds following the adults in

flight and returning to shore to be fed, but he was unable to observe the changeover to self-feeding. Tomkins (Wilson Bull., 71:320, 1959) noted that in the Least Tern flying young accompany the adult, who catches a fish and alights on the water to give it to the young. In view of the scarcity of information on this critical period, observations I made on Great Gull Island, Suffolk County, New York, may be of interest.

On 29 September 1969, in the mouth of the Thames River at New London, Connecticut, about 7 miles north of Great Gull Island, many terns were resting on the exposed rocks and old pilings near shore. One juvenile Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) was begging with head directed upward, apparently toward an adult overhead. The young bird flew suddenly upward, circled once and landed on the water. The adult landed in front of the chick and put its bill into the water. The young bird, very close in front of the adult, put its bill into the water, then raised it and swallowed a fish. The adult had apparently passed a fish to the young under water.

On 26 September 1970, after most of the terns had left Great Gull Island, I noticed four Common Terns fishing near the western end of the island. There were two adult-juvenile pairs, as Tomkins (loc. cit.) reported for the Least Tern. For approximately 10 minutes I observed the adults skimming, diving, flying just above the surface and circling the area; they were closely followed in these maneuvers by the young. Fish must have been abundant and near the surface as both adults caught fish easily. After about 10 minutes the original four birds were joined by another adult—young pair of Common Terns and by an adult—young pair of Roseate Terns (*S. dougallii*). These eight birds continued the follow-the-leader actions described above for another 20 minutes before leaving the vicinity of the island.

During the 30 minutes of observations the young terns were never seen to actually enter the water, always halting their dives abruptly just short of the surface, nor were they seen to catch a fish. Once an adult caught a fish and flew up with it until it was in front of the young, dropped it and caught it again before it had fallen more than a few feet. While adult terns do occasionally drop fish and catch them in this manner, it seemed significant that the adult flew to the young before dropping the fish.

A Common and a Roseate Tern caught as downy chicks and offered live killifish regularly for several weeks in captivity, watched the live fish from a distance but never ate one, although both learned to eat cut up fish from a bowl. This behavior and the observations reported above lead me to believe that the young tern must learn to respond to living fish as an item of food and must then learn and perfect the technique for catching them. Presumably the learning period is lengthy. Hays and Donaldson in a study of post-breeding dispersal (in prep.) report a young Common Tern nine weeks of age being fed by an adult. Partial dependence on the parents may extend even to the wintering quarters (Ashmole and Tovar S., Auk, 85:90-100, 1968) especially for chicks hatching late in the season.

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—MARY LECROY, *Department of Ornithology, The American Museum of Natural History, New York, N. Y. 10024, 26 July 1971.*

Lek behavior in the Broad-tailed Hummingbird.—I recently observed behavior in the Broad-tailed Hummingbird (*Selasphorus platycercus*) which I interpret as communal male displays, or lek behavior. These observations were made daily from 11-14 June 1971 at Moraine Park in Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado, at an elevation of about 8,000 feet. I observed three male Broad-tailed Hummingbirds performing their