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Hummingbird drinking seawater.—On 27 September 1972, at Bahia Concha near Santa Marta, Colombia, I watched a green hummingbird (sp. ?) apparently drinking from the surface of the sea. Bahia Concha is a sheltered bay surrounded by steep, rocky limestone hillsides covered with cactus and thorn scrub. That afternoon the sea was relatively calm and the weather hot and dry.

I first noticed the hummingbird sitting on the branch of a tree overhanging the sea at the eastern end of the bay. The bird flew down to the surface of the sea, hovering a few inches above the small waves, and when the water surface was smooth between wave crests it flew down quickly, dipped its beak into the water, and then returned to the branch. It remained on the branch for 2 or 3 minutes and then repeated the beak-dipping procedure at intervals over a 20-minute period, after which it flew away. I remained as quiet as possible in the water about 10 feet from the bird and thus had a clear view of its behavior. As it held its beak in the water for 2 or 3 seconds on each of four occasions, I believe it was drinking the salt water, not picking up insects from the surface.

Although I noted no local sources of fresh water, the bird should have been able to obtain some water from its food as the cacti were in bloom on the hillsides. This suggests the possibility that drinking the seawater enabled it to obtain mineral salts required to supplement its normal diet. Verbeek (1971, *Condor* 73: 112) reported that hummingbirds will eat sand grains, presumably for the calcium salts they contain; the ingestion of seawater would supply the bird with these and other salts that it may require.—PETER R. BACON, *Department of Biological Sciences, University of the West Indies, Trinidad, West Indies.* Accepted 18 Jan. 73.