

GENERAL NOTES

Aberrant feather condition in a White-winged Junco.—On 7 January 1973, we examined a White-winged Junco (*Junco hyemalis aikeni*) that manifested an aberrant feather condition. Growing from amidst the body contour feathers on the junco's right side was a single flight (primary or secondary) feather. By probing, we could feel a firm lump from which the shaft projected. The distal portion of this flight feather was broken off. The remaining portion was 2.8 cm in length and 1.3 cm in width. The feather emerged from the side of the body at a point 2 cm below the shoulder joint.

After recording the above data, we released this White-winged Junco with band number 75-20589. On 10 March 1973, Baylor recaptured this bird, and the aberrant feather was present in the same condition as it was at the initial observation.

In the course of our banding nearly 2,000 White-winged Juncos during the previous 17 years, as well as our banding many individuals of other species, we had never before encountered a bird with such a feather formation. In discussion with us, Dr. Leland Johnson, Professor of Biology at Augustana College, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, speculated that a subcutaneous tumor could have been the source of this abnormal feather growth. Whatever the cause and because the special literature on abnormal feather occurrences is not available to us, we share this account for its general interest and for possible use by investigators of peculiar feather growth.—L. M. BAYLOR, *South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, Rapid City, South Dakota 57701*; and N. R. WHITNEY, JR., *633 S. Berry Pine Road, Rapid City, South Dakota 57701*. Received 18 March 1974, accepted 1 April 1974.

A note on aerial courtship of Red-tailed Hawks.—On 20 April 1974 while in a clearcut on the Jefferson National Forest in Montgomery County near Blacksburg, Virginia, I observed an unusual addition to the normal courtship flight of the Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*). The openness of the clearcut afforded me a clear view of the ridge of Sinking Creek Mountain above which I watched courtship behavior of a pair of Red-tailed Hawks. The hawks, especially the smaller (probably the male), performed the typical dives and ascents as they swirled in a thermal. As the larger of the two, the female, left the thermal and started soaring southwesterly along the ridge, the male slowly approached the female from above. When the male was about one foot directly over her, he extended his legs and momentarily touched and grasped the back of the female. The contact lasted about two seconds after which both birds, apparently finding another thermal, spiraled to three times their original height; then, with the female following the male, they disappeared from sight in the trees on the next ridge.

Although the male hawk's tail was depressed during the contact I observed, the female did not respond by raising her tail, thus coition did not occur. The observation suggests the possibility of aerial copulation, but wind currents would probably lessen the chance of successful contact. It is more probable that attempted aerial copulation is an infrequent component of courtship and possibly precedes normal copulatory behavior in trees.

Summer (Bent, 1937, *U. S. Natl. Mus., Bull.* 167) noted that the male of a pair of Red-tailed Hawks seemed to touch the back of its mate on four occasions.—RICHARD N. CONNER, *Department of Biology, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia 24061*. Received 30 April 1974, accepted 10 June 1974.

Longevity record for the Arctic Tern.—On 19 June 1970 an Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) bearing band 35.325864 was trapped at its nest on Petit Manan Island, Maine and then released after rebanding. It had been banded as a chick nearly 34 years earlier in the same colony (then on the adjacent island). The bird weighed 119 g and appeared to be in excellent condition despite having had a broken bill. The upper mandible had an old break and was about 8 mm shorter than the lower mandible.

The band (which was removed) showed few signs of wear and appeared to be unexpectedly heavy. It later transpired that, although bands from the same 100 had been used in 1936, the Bird Banding Laboratory had no record of this band being applied to a bird. Accordingly, I considered this recovery of uncertain

status pending further investigations. Subsequently, Arnold E. Davis reported from his field notes that he banded 49 young terns on Green Island by Petit Manan on 24 July 1936, and that the band in question was one of those used. He did not report the data for these bands. The problem raised by the apparent lack of wear of the band was explained by the discovery that bands of that series are unusually heavy (mean weight of 10 unworn bands is 0.262 g, which is about 11% heavier than recent size 3 bands). The rate of weight loss (assumed to be constant) of 0.4% per year is similar to that of 16 other bands on Arctic Terns (0.5-1.2% per year). The results of this study of band-wear will be presented elsewhere.

It seems appropriate to report this record of a 34-year old Arctic Tern, not only because it now appears to be the longest-banded wild larid known for North America, following retraction of the record of a 36-year-old Herring gull (Jonkel and Pettingill, *Auk*, **91**: 432, 1974), but also because it had what appeared to be a substantial bill injury, not of recent origin. Previous longevity records for Arctic Terns include one 23-year-old reported by Bergstrom (*Bird-Banding*, **23**: 72, 1952) and a 28-year-old from Manitoba in the banding files, and there is a record of a 27-year-old from Europe (*BTO News*, September, 1972). However, in light of the low adult mortality of Arctic Terns and the slow rate of band wear on this species, this record probably will not remain the oldest for long.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the support of the Massachusetts Audubon Society and to thank Dr. Ian C. T. Nisbet (who trapped the bird), as well as an enthusiastic team of tern-trappers too numerous to list individually. This report is Contribution Number 122 from the Scientific Staff of the Massachusetts Audubon Society. JEREMY J. HATCH, *Department of Biology, University of Massachusetts at Boston, Mass. 02125*. Received 3 June 1974, accepted 20 June 1974.

First record of the Goshawk for Louisiana—a collected, banded bird.

—On 30 September 1972 we banded an adult female Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*) with a USF & WS lock-on type band (617-02754) as part of an intensive raptor banding program on Hawk Ridge at Duluth, Minnesota. It was shot two months later on 30 November 1972 by Cecil Koepf four miles northeast of Amite, Louisiana and is now specimen number 73360 in the Louisiana State University Museum of Zoology at Baton Rouge. The straight line distance between Duluth and Amite is approximately 1,860 kilometers (1,160 miles) which would entail an average daily flight of at least 31 km or 20 miles.

Dr. George H. Lowery, Jr. of Louisiana State University has informed us that he knows of no previous record of the Goshawk in Louisiana. We wish to thank the Hawk Ridge Nature Reserve for granting us permission to trap and band on Hawk Ridge.—DAVID L. EVANS, *Dept. of Zoology, North Dakota State University, Fargo, North Dakota*, 58102 and CHARLES R. SINDELAR, 456 Baird Street, Waukesha, Wisconsin, 53186. Received 18 March 1974, accepted 1 April 1974.

A longevity record for the Appalachian Ruffed Grouse.—A banded female Appalachian Ruffed Grouse (*Bonasa umbellus monticola*) was shot by a hunter on 4 January 1973 in Brown Township, Vinton County, Ohio. Banding records show that this bird (band #A-18) was first captured and banded as a young-of-the-year in an upland central hardwood forest on 16 August 1965 in Madison Township, Vinton County, approximately 1.6 km south of the Madison-Brown Township line. A recent study has shown that 80 percent of Ohio Ruffed Grouse hatch during the two-week period of 15-28 May (Davis, *Ohio J. Sci.*, **68**: 312, 1968). Assuming #A-18 hatched during this period in 1965, she was 91 months old at the time of death. As far as we know, this is a longevity record for a wild Ruffed Grouse of this subspecies. Among the 12 recognized North American subspecies of Ruffed Grouse (Aldrich, *J. Wildl. Manage.*, **27**: 535, 1963), only a Minnesota male grouse (*B.u. togata* or *B.u. mediana*), to our knowledge, has lived longer in the wild, achieving an age of 94 months before succumbing to an avian predator (Gullion, *Loom*, **38**: 132, 1966).

Ruffed Grouse seldom live long in the wild. Bump et al. (The Ruffed Grouse: life history-propagation-management. Buffalo, N. Y. The Holling Press, Inc. p # 527, 1947) reported that the average adult grouse meets death before three years and found no birds older than six years. Gullion and Marshall (*Living Bird*, **7**: 145, 1968) reported that 45 percent of juvenile Minnesota grouse survive from fall to the following spring. Upon reaching adulthood (one year old), the 12-