Comparison of 1935, 1940, and 1946 populations of nesting bald eagles in east-central Florida.—In earlier reports of this study (Auk, 54: 296–299, 1937, and Auk, 58: 402, 1941) I have presented data showing a decrease in the density of nesting bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) in Florida along the Indian River in Brevard and Volusia counties between the cities of Cocoa and New Smyrna.

In 1935, I visited the nesting sites of 24 pairs of bald eagles. The areas within a radius of one mile of each of these nesting sites were selected as a composite study area in which to observe the population trend. By 1940 the population in this study area was reduced to 20 pairs of eagles. Thus the population had decreased almost 17 per cent in five years. In 1946 the population of the study area was 17 pairs of eagles. During this period of six years the population decreased 15 per cent. In the eleven years since the start of this study the population in this sample area has decreased almost 30 per cent.—JOSEPH C. HOWELL, *University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee.* (Contribution No. 19, from the Department of Zoology and Entomology.)

A new button-quail from New Guinea.—In a small collection of birds from New Guinea assembled by Mr. J. Frank Cassel and presented by him to Cornell University, there is a specimen of the spotted button-quail, *Turnix maculosa.* It was collected near Finschhafen, in northeastern New Guinea. Mayr (1941) lists only one subspecies of button-quail, *Turnix maculosa horsbrughi*, from New Guinea, for which he gives the range as follows: "South New Guinea from the Merauke district to the Aroa River and Port Moresby; Sudest group (Tagula, Veina), Louisiade Archipelago. Grasslands up to 100 m." Even the most superficial comparison of the Finschhafen specimen with specimens of *T. m. horsbrughi* in the American Museum of Natural History sufficed to show that it was not of that race. Since Finschhafen is isolated from the normal range of *horsbrughi* by a series of mountain ranges, and since grassland areas suitable for *Turnix* in New Guinea are discontinuous, it is not surprising that this specimen proved to be most like *saturata* of New Britain, directly across the Dampier Straits from Finschhafen. As there are to my knowledge no female specimens of *T. m. saturata* in any museum in North America, I borrowed such a specimen from the British Museum through the courtesy of Mr. J. D. Macdonald of that institution. The Finschhafen specimen proves to be neither *horsbrughi* nor *saturata*, but an apparently undescribed race, which I propose to name as follows:

Turnix maculosa furva, new subspecies

TYPE: Female, Louis Agassiz Fuertes Memorial Collection (no. 21393), Cornell University; Gusika, ten miles north of Finschhafen, New Guinea, one-eighth mile from coast, altitude 150 feet (estimated); July 9, 1944; J. Frank Cassel, collector, original number NG 5.

DESCRIPTION: Darkest of the races of *Turnix maculosa.* Closest in size to *T. m. horsbrughi* of southern New Guinea, agreeing exactly in this respect with one specimen from the Fly River, but very different in color from that race. Closest in color to *T. m. saturata* of New Britain, but differs in being smaller and everywhere darker; throat, breast, belly and flanks are deeper rufous than in *saturata*, being almost chestnut in color; ochraceous color of the outer edges of the wing-coverts and tertials is deeper, and the buffy edges of the scapulars narrower than in *saturata.* A broad rufous nuchal collar is typical of *horsbrughi* and is present in the type of *salmonis* from Guadalcanal; this collar is absent in *saturata.* In the type of *furva*, there is a faint indication of a rufous wash on three or four of the nuchal feathers. The light

central crown-stripe is absent or barely indicated in *saturata*, present (although narrow and interrupted) in the type of *furva*. The crown-stripe is subject to much individual variation in this species as a whole. The ground color of the upper parts is seen in good light to be everywhere blacker (less grayish) in *furva* than in *saturata*. The iris is brownish yellow (usually listed as white for other races of *Turnix maculosa*), the bill yellow, and the feet and legs "topaz tinted yellow" (original label).

DISCUSSION: The bill of the type specimen of *Turnix maculosa furva* is rather remarkable in shape, being quite different from that of any examined specimen of this species. The upper mandible possesses an arched keel, making the distance between the culmen and the upper edge of the nostril noticeably greater than in any other specimen of this species. The upper mandible is also produced into a longer point than is normal in this species. I have hesitated in embodying this peculiar bill shape in the subspecific diagnosis because of the possibility of this being an aberration. Ernst Mayr, James P. Chapin and Jean Delacour have all examined this specimen, and are unanimous in their belief that this bill shape is most probably an abnormality.

TABLE 1

MEASUREMENTS IN MILLIMETERS OF FEMALE BUTTON-QUAIL

Specimen	*Wing (flat)*	*Tarsus*	*Culmen*
T. m. furva			
Finschhafen, New Guinea (type)	80	20	14
T. m. horsbrughi			
Aroa River, New Guinea	78	23	13
Fly River, New Guinea	80	20	13
Tagula Is., Louisiade Group	72	19	12
Tagula Is., Louisiade Group	71	20	12
T. m. saturata			
Blanche Bay, New Britain	85*	22	13
T. m. salmonis			
Guadalcanal, Solomon Is. (type)	85	20	12.5

* The wings of two other specimens of *saturata* examined by Dr. Mayr at the British Museum also measured 85 millimeters.

Button-quails of this species are very rare in collections. They are shy and secretive in their habits, and often exceedingly difficult to collect. This fact has helped to counteract my hesitation to describe a new subspecies from a single specimen. In a somewhat parallel instance, Mayr (1938) described *T. m. salmonis* from Guadalcanal on the basis of a single specimen (the species never having been previously known from the Solomon Islands). This bird has since been rediscovered (Pendleton, 1947, and others). It is hoped that some day new observations will be made of *furva*.

While examining specimens of the various races of *Turnix maculosa* preparatory to the writing of this paper, I was struck by the marked need of a revision of this entire species. The arrangements presented by Mathews (1927) and by Peters (1934) are unsatisfactory. The easternmost races of the species are fairly well-marked as presently understood, although I agree with Mayr (1938) that the bird of the Louisiade Archipelago will eventually prove to be separable from *horsbrughi* of southeastern New Guinea, for it seems to be strikingly smaller. The more western races, however, are badly confused. The races of the Lesser Sunda Islands and of Australia are in great need of rearrangement. The group of birds now united as *Turnix maculosa maculosa*, for instance, consists of at least two recognizable races. However, as

Mayr (1938, 1944) comments, a thorough revision of this species must await the assembling of more and better material than is now available.

I am indebted to Dr. Ernst Mayr for much help and advice, and for the use of his notes on certain *Turnix* specimens in the British Museum. Mr. J. D. Macdonald of the latter institution kindly arranged to lend me one of the few known specimens of *T. m. saturata*. I also wish to thank Mr. Dean Amadon, Dr. James P. Chapin, and Capt. Jean Delacour for their many suggestions.

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—Kenneth C. Parkes, *Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.*

The status of the spotted rail, *Pardirallus maculatus*, of Chiapas.[1]—In the Auk (64: 460, 1947) I recorded that Señor Miguel Alvarez del Toro had informed me of the capture alive near Tuxtla, Gutierrez, Chiapas, of a spotted rail, a bird new to the Mexican avifauna. He supplied a photograph of the bird which clearly confirmed his identification. As the bird was then living in captivity and was in very worn plumage, I suggested that it would be useless for comparison and that it would be better to wait until it had grown fresh plumage before preserving it as a specimen. This has now transpired, and some time ago, I was pleased to receive the skin for examination. Inasmuch as the nearest locality from which the species had been recorded previously was the Ycacos Lagoon, British Honduras, whence only one specimen has been taken, the type of *insolitus*, it was imperative to compare the two birds.

I am indebted to Mr. J. L. Peters of the Museum of Comparative Zoology for the trouble he has taken in comparing the Chiapas specimen with the type of *insolitus*, and in writing me of his observations. He notes that the Chiapas specimen has more white in its plumage, partly but not wholly, due to the freshness of its feathering, as the type of *insolitus* is somewhat abraded and the pale edges of its feathers are partly gone. However, the white bars (not subject to abrasion) on the feathers of the abdomen, flanks and crissum are about twice as wide in the Chiapas specimen as in the Ycacos bird, and the black bars are correspondingly reduced in the former. Also, the white spots on the tertials are more linear, less rounded in the type of *insolitus* than in the Chiapas example.

Among a small series of specimens of the nominate form examined, I have seen two from the Paraguayan Chaco, one of which has the white ventral bars very much broader than the black ones and the other has the black ones wider than the white ones. I hesitate, therefore, to attach too much value to this character in differentiating the Chiapas bird from the one from British Honduras.

[1] Published by permission of the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution.