October 6, in southern Louisiana." Oberholser's latest autumn date in Louisiana is October 6, 1889, and there are no winter records. I have been unable to find any other record of winter occurrences in the state. Howell and Green, in their works on Florida birds, report the species as not uncommon in winter in southern Florida; Bent (U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull. 179: 91, 1942) likewise reports winter records from southern Florida; Greene *et al.*, in their work on the birds of Georgia, have a single record of a wintering bird—at Tifton, southern Georgia, January 2 to February 9, 1943; Burleigh does not record the species in his study of the birds of southernmost Mississippi; Williams, Rice Institute, Houston, Texas, tells me that he knows of only two winter records of the species on the Texas coast in the last 15 years—at Galveston on December 14 and December 25, 1941, and at Rockport on December 6, 1942; and the species has appeared but once (1939) on the Christmas bird-counts recorded from the lower Rio Grande Valley since 1933. In view of the extreme scarcity of the species in winter along most of our gulf coastal area, the three birds wintering in southern Louisiana seem worth recording.—JOSEPH D. BIGGS, *Waubun Laboratories, Schriever, Louisiana.*

***Muscivora forficata* in Florida.**—In the Auk (65: 143, 1948) I saw a record for the scissor-tailed flycatcher, *Muscivora forficata*, in south Florida. It should be pointed out that this species is by no means rare at Key West. There are numerous records for that area. I saw at least three there on March 9, 1946, and even obtained kodachrome motion pictures of one. On April 4, 1942, I saw one near Homestead; on April 13, 1946, I observed another as far north as Cross City and on March 2, 1948, found one at Fort Meyers.—ALLAN D. CRUICKSHANK, *Rye, New York.*

Crested flycatchers nesting some distance from their foraging area.—Shackleford Banks is a narrow island on the North Carolina coast, just westward of Cape Lookout. The outer half of the island is a desolate stretch of barren sand, on which are scattered about the broken skeletons of a dead forest of red cedars killed by wind-driven sand. The inner half of the island is covered by a dense woodland formed chiefly of red cedar, live-oak, and yaupon holly. The inner margin of the sand forms a wall which is slowly advancing over the island and burying the woodland along an irregular line which now lies 400 to 800 yards from the outer beach.

In June, 1948, two nests of the crested flycatcher, *Myiarchus crinitus*, were found far out in the dead forest. The first (June 10) was in a weathered-out knothole in a nearly horizontal branch of a red cedar, about two feet above the sand. This tree stood 167 long paces, in a direct line, from the woodland at the edge of the sand wall, and 114 paces from the beach. Two birds were bringing food to the nest which contained at least three young. A second nest was discovered (June 11) in a similar location, about 1200 yards distant. This one was 274 long paces from the woods, only 97 paces from the beach. It was within sight and sound of the surf, in one of the outermost of the dead trees. Here also, two birds were busy feeding the five young.

In short observation periods on three separate days I saw these birds make ten round trips between the nest sites and the woodland carrying food to the young. Insects were not entirely lacking on the sandy waste since many large dragonflies hawked over it, but the strong onshore wind which always blows here in the summer kept the area decidedly clear of the mosquitoes, gnats, and several kinds of biting flies which are numerous in the woodland. Once, one of the parents, perching as usual for a moment on the nest-tree after a trip to the nest with food, darted out to catch a dragonfly within five feet of the nest and carried it inside. This was the only observation of the birds taking food over the sand waste. They habitually flew

several hundred yards to the woodland on a circuitous route, making a noticeably slow and labored return against the strong wind. It seemed that the flycatchers sought all their food in the distant woodland. They never were seen perched anywhere in the dead forest, except close by or on the nest-tree, immediately before entering the nest or immediately after leaving it.

Since there are many decaying or partly decayed live-oaks in the woodland offering apparently suitable nesting sites, and since the skeletons of the sand-killed trees come right up to the sand wall at the edge of the woodland, it is puzzling that these birds should go so far out into the wasteland, so far from their foraging area, to establish their nests. In flying between the edge of the woodland and the nest sites, the birds passed dozens of dead trees, every one of which contained cavities that appeared (to the human eye) to be identical with those chosen by the birds. I am certain that none of these was being used by other birds, so that competition could not have been a factor in selecting the sites. This open wasteland, dotted with dead trees, is entirely free of snakes and other predators, so that the nests, because of their location, were completely insured against predatory enemies; but is it reasonable to suppose that the flycatchers could realize that fact, and act accordingly? The nests would also have been immune from attack in dead trees near the sand wall adjacent to the foraging area; in other years, I have found crested flycatchers nesting here, within 20 yards of the woodland.—WILLIAM L. ENGELS, *Department of Zoology, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N. C.*

Probable destruction of queen bees by swallows.—Mr. Fred M. Sickler of Bonsall, California, noted my article (Condor, 47: 261–264, 1945) on swallows selecting drone bees. He is of the opinion that birds cause a very negligible loss of worker bees, that the loss of drones is a good riddance, and that swallows do real harm in eating queen bees.

Mr. Sickler writes: "This summer I noticed large numbers of barn, cliff and greenback swallows flying about 100 feet above one of my apiaries for several weeks. Fifteen parent hives became queenless after swarming, a real loss in more ways than one. Worker bees fly close to the ground whereas queens and drones fly high and slow. There was no loss of queens at another apiary three miles away where no swallows had appeared."

To the list of bee-eating birds which appeared in the above quoted article, Mr. Sickler adds the California shrike, *Lanius ludovicianus gambeli*, and Brewer's blackbird, *Euphagus cyanocephalus*. I saw a California brown towhee, *Pipilo fuscus*, apparently pick up and eat a bee from the alighting board of my hive, but as I have seen this only once I cannot be sure of the case.—CHAPMAN GRANT, *2970 Sixth Ave., San Diego, California.*

Fall aggregations of cliff swallows in the Allegheny Mountains.—For the past 20 years I have been observing aggregations of northern cliff swallows, *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*, in fall migration through West Virginia and Maryland sections of the Alleghenies. These aggregations are usually to be found during the last week of August and the first 10 days of September. They almost invariably occur in elevated valleys between the high Allegheny ridges. I have not found large flocks of migrating cliff swallows in autumn in any lowland section of the region.

One of the remarkable features of these aggregations is that the birds return to the same sections of telephone and power line wire each season. Mr. Brown Beard of Bartow, West Virginia, a careful observer, tells me that in 30 years the swallows have not failed to appear along a certain section of State Highway No. 28, near his