

**Note on the mating behavior of the Least Tern, *Sterna albifrons*.**—On 3 May 1966 at about 1645 hours on Siesta Key, Sarasota, Florida, I noted a Least Tern, *Sterna albifrons*, on the beach several yards from the water. The lone bird stood preening itself for several minutes before another Least Tern alighted on the beach about a foot away with a fish about 5 cm in length carried crosswise in its bill. The new arrival, a male, although its sex was not apparent until a moment later, approached the first bird, the female, from behind. The female then squatted on her belly in the sand. The male tern stood behind and slightly over the female, moving his head and consequently the fish, back and forth, in a rather slow methodic manner. This movement continued for about a minute, whereupon the male quickly mounted the female, remaining for only a second. Without giving the fish to the female the male then flew away, and the female followed an instant later, both perhaps frightened by people walking along the shore.

Within a few minutes I saw another, or possibly the same, pair. The female remained on the beach while the male flew off to go fishing. After several graceful swoops and plunges into the shallow water, he caught a fish, returned, and lit beside the waiting female, usually remaining only long enough to put the fish into her mouth before flying off again. My notes made at the time fail to mention any calls or signals of recognition made by the pair when the male was only a short distance away. But when the male flew a longer distance in search of fish, or the female changed location, seemingly because of human intruders as happened three or four times during the hour I watched them, the male called a continual high shrill *cher-eeep, cher-eeep, cher-eeep* as he returned along the shore. When he was almost overhead, the female answered with a single *cher-eeep*, somewhat lower in pitch than that of the male. The male then descended and fed the female. Throughout this time the male was constantly either in search of food or feeding the female.

The mating behavior of this pair differs in its comparative simplicity from that reported by Hardy (The Least Tern in the Mississippi Valley, Publ. Mus., Michigan State Univ., Biol. Ser., vol. 1, no. 1, 1957: 1-60) who describes the phases of courtship display in approximate order as aerial glide, posturing, parading, copulation, and incipient nest building. He also cites instances in which variations, including the omission and/or combination of one or more of these phases occur. For example, during the posturing and parading phases observed by Hardy (op. cit.) the female may be presented with a fish; immediately prior to copulation, side to side head movements are made by both birds; and during copulation, both birds call and then interlock their bills. In the pair I watched the posturing and parading were omitted, side to side head movements were made by the male only, with fish, and there was no calling or interlocking of bills.—KATHERINE VON SCHMIDT, *Mole Marine Laboratory, Sarasota, Florida 33581*.

**What is *Pionus reichenowi* (Heine)?**—In 1884 Heine (J. f. Orn., 32: 264) described as *Pionias Reichenowi* a parrot that he thought came from “northern Brazil or Peru.” Peters (Check-list of birds of the world, vol. 3, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard Univ. Press, 1937: 214) lists this name as a synonym of *Pionus menstruus*, the well-known and widespread Blue-headed Parrot, considering it a color variant thereof. Peters apparently based his decision on a communication from E. Stresemann, who examined one of Heine’s specimens. In a footnote Peters quotes Stresemann as follows: “The two types of *Pionias reichenowi* Heine are in the Museum Heineanum at Halberstadt, but according to the original description one of them equals a speci-

men in the Berlin Museum (no. 9805) collected by Sieber in 'Brazil,' very probably near Pará (not Peru, this being a typographical error in the original description). This specimen answers the description of *reichenowi* very well and differs from all other skins in the collection by the characters mentioned; nevertheless I feel convinced that this is nothing but an individual variant of *P. menstruus*."

Examination of material in the Emil Kaempfer Collection at The American Museum of Natural History shows that we are dealing with a perfectly well marked race, separable at a glance by its blue abdomen to be known as *Pionus menstruus reichenowi* (Heine). The characters of this subspecies, essentially as set forth by Heine, are: Similar to *Pionus m. menstruus* but head, neck, and throat darker blue; feathers of the throat lacking the pink-red bases present in *menstruus*. Feathers of the back and rump darker green edged with blue, especially on the rump. Feathers of the breast and belly olive, instead of green and broadly tipped with indigo blue. Sides, flanks, and legs green as in *menstruus* but suffused with light blue. Under tail coverts red as in *menstruus* but with blue centers instead of green. Bill blackish with a yellowish patch at base of upper mandible as compared to the red patch in *menstruus*. Upper wing coverts golden green instead of grass green; under wing coverts similar to *menstruus* but with indigo blue edgings.

The following specimens in our collection represent *reichenowi*: Bahia, Cajazeiras, 1,000', Rio Grungogy, 3 ♂; Espirito Santo, Lagõa Juparaná, 1 ♂, 2 ♀; Brazil, Maximilian Collection, 1, no sex.

In 1960 O. Pinto (São Paulo, Brazil, Papeis Avulsos Do Departamento De Zoologia, 14: 12-13, 1960) described a race *Pionus menstruus cyanescens* which, unfortunately, proves to be a synonym of *reichenowi*, a name Pinto did not mention. The localities given by Pinto do, however, help us define the range of *P. m. reichenowi*. He records it north to Rio Largo, Maceio, Alagoas, and south to Pau Gigante, Espirito Santo. Thus the range of this subspecies may be given as "coastal forests of eastern Brazil from (at least) Alagoas to Espirito Santo."

As noted above, Stresemann believes that the earlier specimens came from Pará. Possibly the range of *reichenowi* extends that far north, but more probably the birds were merely exported from there.—CHARLES E. O'BRIEN, *American Museum of Natural History, New York, New York 10024*.

***Parus rufescens levyi* a nomen novum for *P. r. caliginosus* Burleigh.**—An area comprised of parts of British Columbia, Washington, Idaho, Oregon, and Montana is the range of a distinctive population of Chestnut-backed Chickadees I described under the name *Parus rufescens caliginosus* (Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash., 72: 15-16, 1959). Kenneth C. Parkes of the Carnegie Museum recently pointed out to me that *P. a. caliginosus* Burleigh is a junior primary homonym of *Parus wollweberi caliginosus* van Rossem (Fieldiana-Zoology, 31: 89, 1947) and is therefore preoccupied. Snow (Check-list of birds of the world, 7: 88, 1967) placed *P. r. caliginosus* in the synonymy of *P. r. rufescens* without having seen specimens. Parkes, who has compared fresh fall series from the populations in question, agrees with me that *caliginosus* is a valid subspecies. Under these circumstances I am renaming the interior population of the Chestnut-backed Chickadee *Parus rufescens levyi*. The patronymic acknowledges the significant contributions to our knowledge of the avifauna of Idaho made by Seymour H. Levy during the years he resided in the state.—THOMAS D. BURLEIGH, 97 McKay Avenue, Reno, Nevada 89502.