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Brandt Cormorant killed by fish.—On 22 April 1968 two students, Thomas Rambo and Shane Anderson, attending Moss Landing Marine Laboratories, found a dead Brandt Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax penicillatus*) on the beach 0.5 miles south of the laboratories with a midshipman (*Porichthys notatus*) lodged in its throat. The cormorant had tried to swallow the fish in a normal head first position (Figure 1), but the fish apparently spread its gill opercula defensively and one of the opercular spines penetrated the wall of the bird's gular pouch. The cormorant could have swallowed the fish, but upon feeling the spine probably tried to shake the fish out of its mouth, which only helped embed the spine further.

The fish was in the mouth with its ventral side uppermost, and the left opercular spine penetrated the left side of the pouch, worked through to the outside, and caused a laceration 19 mm long and about 25 mm from the gape in line with the mandible and 2 mm beneath the external ear. The cormorant was an adult male (non-reproductive testes 21 mm) and weighed 26.40 kg. Dissection showed the bird had

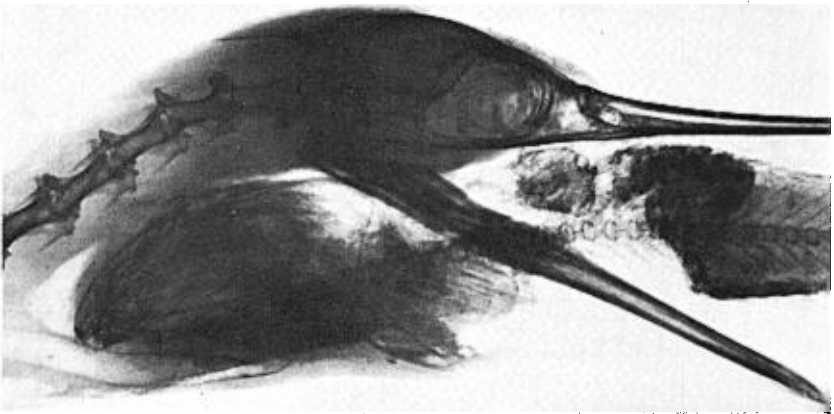


Figure 1. Radiograph of Brandt Cormorant with a partly-swallowed midshipman lodged in its throat. The opercular spine that caused the lodging is not visible.

normal distribution of subcutaneous and mesenteric fat and otherwise appeared normal and healthy. Its proventriculus was empty but contained about 50 helminths 30–40 mm long. The midshipman was 292 mm long and weighed 131 g. The pectoral and abdominal regions of the fish next to the sharp edges of the bird's mandibles were greatly abraded.

Judging from the fresh condition of the cormorant carcass and the dried portion of the fish which hung limply from the bird's mouth, I estimated that the bird had died very recently and had captured the fish a day or two earlier. A similar fatal case reported by Bostic and Banks (Condor, 68: 515, 1966) involved a Brown Pelican (*Pelicanus occidentalis*) that tried to swallow a stingray (*Urotrygon asterias*) which embedded its spine in the bird's throat. Two cases of porpoises killed by fish lodged in the esophagus are on record (Orr, J. Mammal., 18: 370, 1937; Houck, J. Mammal., 42: 107, 1961).

John Hunter of the Central Animal Hospital, Campbell, California kindly provided the X ray.—G. VICTOR MOREJOHN, *Moss Landing Marine Laboratories, Moss Landing, California 95039, and Department of Biological Sciences, San Jose State College, San Jose, California 96114.*

The Indian House Crow attacks a five-striped squirrel.—The afternoon of 25 March 1968 I noticed a House Crow (*Corvus splendens*) perched high in a debdaru tree (*Polyalthia* sp.) near my window. Suddenly the bird swooped swiftly down toward the main trunk of the tree and tried to grasp a climbing five-striped squirrel (*Funambulus pennanti*), which evaded by running up, down, and around the tree trunk in spirals. The crow pursued the squirrel through the tree limbs and made several dives at it, but the squirrel proved agile enough to elude its attacker. The crow then perched in the foliage and waited for the squirrel to expose itself again, which it soon did. When the crow attacked this time, the squirrel quickly scuttled to safety into the foliage. After about 10 more minutes the crow flew away. As the Indian House Crow is omnivorous and highly destructive to nestlings, it presumably intended to eat the squirrel. As the bird was not nesting in the tree, territorial defense can be ruled out.—S. N. SEN GUPTA, *Department of Zoology, University of Calcutta, Calcutta, 19, W. B., India.*

A hybrid Lesser Scaup × Ring-necked Duck.—A hybrid duck believed to be a cross between a Lesser Scaup (*Aythya affinis*) and a Ring-necked Duck (*A. collaris*) was collected 24 October 1967 on the Missouri River about 5 miles southeast of Vermillion, South Dakota. The hybrid (Figure 1) is an adult female (no bursa, ovary 13 × 4.5 mm). The ovary did not appear abnormal. The bird weighed 332 g and had large stores of subcutaneous fat. It was the only bird taken from a flock of five or six; presumably the other birds in the group were Lesser Scaup or Ring-necked Ducks or hybrids. The specimen is deposited in the James Ford Bell Museum of Natural History at the University of Minnesota.

The grayish-white speculum of the hybrid suggests a cross involving one species with a white and one with a gray speculum. The Canvasback (*A. valisineria*) and Redhead (*A. americana*) are readily eliminated by plumage characters and general morphology as possible parental species. Plumage and measurements do not entirely preclude the Greater Scaup (*A. marila*) as one parent, but such a hybrid should be larger and have more white or grayish-white in the primaries. As the Lesser Scaup and Ring-necked Duck are also sympatric over a far greater range than the Ring-neck