

construction. However, Chapin (1939, Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist. 75: 496, 520) mentions species of *Pogoniulus* and *Tricholaema* pecking and hammering, specifically noting that their woodpeckerlike actions probably relate to breeding activity. Chapin (ibid.: 534) also stated that two nests of *Pogonorhynchus rolleti* were found in "live hardwood tree-trunks about fifteen feet from the ground." It is unlikely that this barbet picked the hard wood apart using its bill, forceps-like. The bills of capitonids appear ill-adapted (tip sharply pointed and often decurved, culmen very curved, bill deep) for woodpecking, but at least some species are able to woodpeck successfully.

Barbets are mainly frugivorous but perhaps most species consume some insects, and species of *Pogoniulus* glean insects (like some woodpeckers) from branches and twigs (personal observation). Many insects various barbets take they doubtless glean opportunistically on and about the fruits they normally eat. Woodpeckers are mainly insectivorous, although many species occasionally take fruits, and some woodpeckers (especially *Melanerpes* sp.) are highly frugivorous. It is likely that the common ancestor of woodpeckers and barbets was rather omnivorous, and thus their evolution involved specialization for fruit-eating by barbets, and for woodpecking as a means of obtaining insects by woodpeckers. I have suggested elsewhere (Short 1970, Ostrich, Suppl. 8: 38) that the proliferation of barbets in Africa, compared with the neotropics and Asia, and correlating inversely with the woodpecker (Picidae) faunas of those regions, may have had a direct influence on the evolution of woodpeckers. Competition between early barbets and woodpeckers may have been a major factor in the initial woodpecking specialization of picids. A. L. Rand has suggested (in litt.) that competition from evolving woodpeckers too might have been a factor in the fruit-eating specialization of barbets. This view has merit, particularly when one considers that toucans (Ramphastidae), highly frugivorous relatives of barbets and certainly derived from an ancestor in common with them, evolved and radiated in the woodpecker-rich neotropics, where barbets are poorly represented.—L. L. SHORT, *American Museum of Natural History, New York, New York 10024*. Accepted 27 Dec. 72.

A Pleistocene record for the White-winged Scoter in Maryland.—In recent study of the geology near the mouth of the Potomac River, Raymond T. Rye II, of Silver Spring, Maryland, collected a small clay nodule in which bones were embedded. When cleaned and repaired in the laboratory of the Division of Vertebrate Paleontology of the Smithsonian's Natural History Museum, these proved to be part of the skull of a duck. The specimen, a gift from the collector to the museum, is catalog No. 179282 in the division mentioned.

The fossil came from near high tide level at the base of the low bluff back of the beach on the northern shore of the river at Wailes Bluff, 2.8 miles above Point Lookout, St. Marys County, Maryland. The clay in the nodule has a slight mixture of fine sand with shells of small molluscs and a few coarse pebbles. Mr. Rye, through his detailed studies of the area, attributes the age of the deposit to the Sangamon interglacial period of the Pleistocene.

The bone includes the upper part of the skull, with the central area of the back missing in a narrow section through the supra-occipital, including the foramen magnum. The upper surface is complete through the frontal region to the basal part of the nasal. The postorbital processes are in place on each side, with the squamosal and the outer area of the parietal. Underneath, the basitemporal plate

is fairly complete, but only part of the sphenoidal rostrum remains. The basal part of the occipital condyle is present, but the sides and the top area of the foramen magnum are missing, as is the entire palatal area.

Details of sculpture throughout agree closely with those in a series of modern skulls of the White-winged Scoter, *Melanitta deglandi*, including specimens from eastern and western North America. This constitutes the first record of this duck for the Pleistocene from the Atlantic coastal area. The species has been recorded elsewhere in the Pleistocene of southern California at Newport Bay and San Pedro (Howard 1949, Condor 51: 20) and from the middle Pleistocene of the Fossil Lake formation, Lake County, Oregon (Jehl 1967, Condor 69: 24).—ALEXANDER WETMORE, *Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C. 20560*. Accepted 27 Nov. 72.

Starlings eat larvae on corn ears without eating corn.—In fairly extensive examinations of cornfields throughout central and north central North Carolina and south central Virginia during the summer of 1969, I found two fields where all or most of the larvae of corn earworms (*Heliothis zea*) and fall armyworms (*Spodoptera frugiperda*) were removed from the corn with no corn kernels damaged except those eaten by the larvae. The husks were torn in a characteristic manner on ears earlier containing larvae (Figure 1). Each year since 1969 larvae were similarly removed from other fields in the same general area and during 1971 and 1972 from increasing numbers of fields out to 60 km from the original

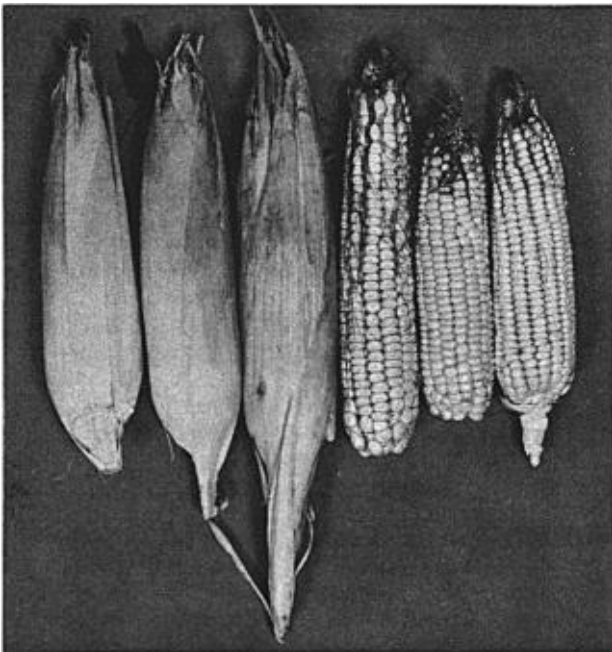


Figure 1. Corn ears from which Starlings removed larvae.