

Malagasy race *P. a. pictilis* is reported to be larger than the nominate African race (Bangs 1918). It is, of course, possible that the Mauritian bird represents an endemic race, in which case the name *nanus* would apply. Until this can be either demonstrated or disproved, *Plotus nanus* Newton and Gadow should be regarded as an undetermined form of *Phalacrocorax africanus*.

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On the function of the posterior iliotochantericus muscle in young whistling ducks (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*).—Conflicting statements arise as to the action of the posterior iliotochantericus muscle in birds because its insertion has been described as both proximal and distal to the head of the femur, thereby suggesting retraction and protraction of the femur, respectively. Additionally, ro-

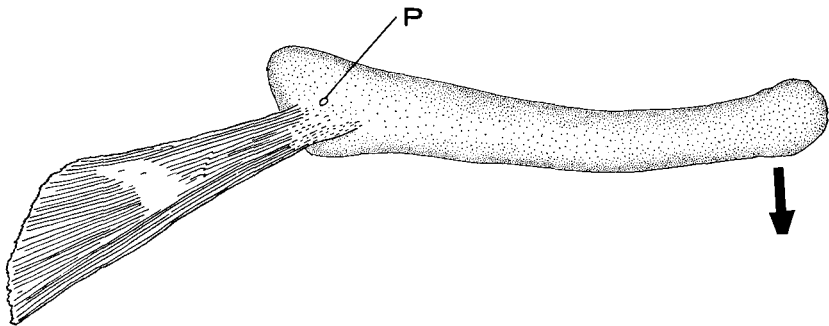


Fig. 1. Lateral view of the posterior iliotochantericus muscle and retracted left femur of a 1-day-old Black-bellied Tree Duck, *Dendrocygna autumnalis*. In this position the muscle can protract the femur (direction indicated by arrow) because of its broad insertion anterior to the pivotal axis of the femoral head (P).

tation of the femur is generally assumed because the muscle inserts on the lateral surface of the femur.

Cracraft (1970, Bird-Banding 41: 254) questions a model of climbing in ducklings because it assumes significant protraction by this muscle (Rylander and Bolen 1970, Auk 87: 72). Examination of the musculature in a 1-day-old *Dendrocygna autumnalis* shows that the insertion spans much of the anterolateral surface of the head of the femur, thereby attaching in part both proximal and distal to the pivotal axis (Fig. 1). Because the head of the femur is relatively broad in young birds, the muscle can protract the femur when this bone is in a retracted position.

Femoral protraction by this muscle was demonstrated experimentally by removing the sartorius, anterior iliiochantericus, and iliotibialis muscles in a nembutol-anesthetized 1-day-old hatchery chick that was suspended vertically so that the hind limb hung limp. When the muscle was stimulated with 1-5 volts, the femur rotated slightly but also protracted through an arc of about 10 degrees, thus supporting its possible role as a protractor in climbing ducklings. As the stimulus was carefully applied to the posterior iliiochantericus, it is believed that contraction of the more deeply located iliacus and iliiochantericus medius muscles was negligible.—M. K. RYLANDER, *Department of Biological Sciences, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas 79409*. Accepted 4 Mar. 74.

Eggs of other species in Great Horned Owl nests.—While banding nestling Great Horned Owls (*Bubo virginianus*) in 1968, the senior author was surprised to find an intact egg of an American Coot (*Fulica americana*) in an owl nest. We have since watched carefully for such items in 568 Great Horned Owl nests containing young in Saskatchewan and have found eggs of other species on nine occasions (Table 1). During this time 39 additional owl nests were not checked adequately,

TABLE 1
EGGS OF OTHER SPECIES IN GREAT HORNED OWL NESTS

Bander and location ¹	Date	Nest contents
Houston (491 nests): 520-1032, Nut Mountain	20 May 1968	Intact egg of American Coot (<i>Fulica americana</i>)
521-1034, Rose Valley	17 May 1969	Intact coot egg and coot feathers
525-1053, Hagen	13 May 1972	Four red-backed mice (<i>Clethrionomys</i>) and intact egg of Gray Partridge (<i>Perdix perdix</i>)
525-1053, Hagen	13 May 1972	Intact coot egg, intact egg of duck (<i>Anas</i> sp.)
510-1034, Kelliher	20 May 1972	Cracked, uneaten egg of Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>)
512-1053, W of Simpson	21 May 1972	Egg within oviduct of uneaten distal half of adult female Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>)
515-1045, N of Esk	14 June 1972	No food in nest; uneaten coot egg on ground below nest
Whitfield (77 nests): 520-1070, E of Asquith	8 May 1971	Intact Pintail egg and uneaten portion of Pintail
524-1053, E of Domremy	23 May 1971	Two coot carcasses and intact duck egg

¹ 520-1032 is a 10-min block, from 52° 00' N and 103° 20' W.