

the two samples simply reflect the relative availability of prey through time cannot be ruled out. The only occurrence of carrion in the diet (as indicated by the presence of dipteran larvae) was represented by the remains of one *Oryzomys longicaudatus* (Cricetidae).

The weight ($\bar{x} \pm SE$) of Chimango Caracaras was 299.6 ± 7.1 g ($n = 19$) for females and 288.5 ± 10.3

g ($n = 10$) for males. The difference between the means is not statistically significant ($t = 1.08$; $df = 27$; $P > 0.20$).

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Reciprocal Allopreening in the Brown-headed Nuthatch

D. BRUCE BARBOUR^{1, 2} AND ANTHONY R. DEGANGE^{3, 4}

¹ Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, 4005 South Main Street, Gainesville, Florida 32601 USA, and ³ Department of Biology, University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida 33620 USA

In his extensive reviews of allopreening, Harrison (1965, 1969) did not record this behavior for the Sittidae, nor did Kilham (1968, 1972, 1973) mention observing this behavior in either White-breasted (*Sitta carolinensis*) or Red-breasted (*S. canadensis*) nuthatches. Norris (1958: 187), however, mentioned the occurrence of allopreening in Brown-headed Nuthatches (*S. pusilla*), in passing. Here we relate our observations of reciprocal allopreening between two Brown-headed Nuthatches.

The incident began at about 0840 (EST) on 8 November 1975 in a pine flatwoods in Marion County, north-central Florida. It had rained heavily the previous afternoon and evening, and the vegetation was heavy with dew. The morning was partly sunny, but hazy from high humidity. The two nuthatches were perched on branches in the sunlight midway up a 25-m longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*). They auto-preened continuously and vigorously for 10–15 min. Nuthatch A, which was perched about 2 m lower than B and farther from the trunk, left its perch and foraged for 2–3 min along the trunk of the tree. No vocalizations were heard. Bird A then flew and landed at the right side of B on a horizontal branch; their bodies appeared to be touching. Nuthatch A initiated preening of the right side of B's breast, back, and the side of its head and neck. Bird A was then momentarily distracted by a low-flying plane and gazed skyward. While A looked upward, nuthatch B reciprocated by preening the left side of A's neck and upper breast. After B's 1 min of reciprocal preening, nuthatch A preened B for 30–60 s. Both birds then flew to a pine 40 m away and commenced foraging. At no time during the episodes was there simultaneous allopreening or solicitous fluffing of the feathers, nor did the behavior appear aggressive.

Nuthatches pair for lengthy periods of time, pos-

sibly for life (Lack 1945, Norris 1958, Kilham 1972), and, of the four North American species, two (*S. pusilla* and *S. pygmaea*) are social year round and exhibit cooperative breeding (Norris 1958, Woolfenden 1976). Interestingly, allopreening has now been observed twice in a sexually monomorphic species, *S. pusilla*, and never in either sexually dimorphic species, *S. carolinensis* and *S. canadensis*. In nuthatches, allopreening may be a highly ritualized behavior that functions in establishing and maintaining the pair bond for lengthy periods.

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² Present address: National Audubon Society, Condor Research Center, 87 North Chestnut Street, Ventura, California 93001 USA.

⁴ Present address: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1011 E. Tudor Road, Anchorage, Alaska 99503 USA.

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