

Method of Head Scratching in the Wrentit and Other Species.—The Wrentit (*Chamaea fasciata*) has been classified variously by ornithologists and has sometimes been regarded as constituting the only family of birds unique to North America. The species has been placed in such different groups as the "Toxostominae," Troglodytidae, Paridae, and "Timeliidae" by various older authors; it has been treated as a monotypic family standing next to the "Mniotiltidae" or Sylviidae by others (Lucas, Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., 13, 1890:343). More recent treatments have retained it as a monotypic family or have combined it with the Paradoxornithidae or Timaliidae.

Simmons (Ibis, 99, 1957:178–181) has reviewed the taxonomic importance of head scratching in passerine birds. From observations on 79 species of 25 passerine families, he concluded that only the Timaliidae (11 species observed) scratch their heads "directly" (with the leg under the wing rather than over it). In view of the suggested relationship of the Wrentit with the Timaliidae, it seemed desirable to ascertain the method of head scratching which it uses. Field observation during a summer in the habitat of the Wrentit failed to provide the information because of the reluctance of the species to perch in the open. However, in January, 1958, I had the good fortune to obtain a live Wrentit, for which I wish to thank John Ralph. This bird has been observed to scratch directly 20 times; these observations were made mostly by myself but also by W. J. Hamilton, III, and W. Z. Lidicker. At no time was the bird seen to scratch indirectly. These observations tend to support the claim of some earlier authors that *Chamaea* has close affinities with the Timaliidae.

The reliability of this behavioral character for classification depends upon its consistency in phylogenetically natural groups and upon the number of species for which the method of head scratching has been ascertained. The consistency in natural groups appears to be high, although the Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapillus*), because of its direct method of scratching (Nice, Trans. Linn. Soc. N. Y., 6, 1943:45; Ficken and Ficken, Ibis, 100, 1958:277–278), constitutes an exception among passerines not closely related to the Timaliidae. The Northern Waterthrush (*S. noveboracensis*), the Louisiana Waterthrush (*S. motacilla*), the Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*), and "several European passerines" have been reported to scratch the head directly as nestlings sometimes but not as adults (Ficken and Ficken, *op. cit.*). I detected no such irregularities in nine closely watched, hand-raised Steller's and Scrub jays (*Cyanocitta stelleri* and *Aphelocoma coerulescens*). In addition to the species of passerines reported on by Simmons, Miller (Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool., 38, 1931:220) mentioned one, Nice (*op. cit.*) mentioned three, Haverschmidt (Ibis, 99, 1957:688) added three, Meyerriecks (Bull. Mass. Aud. Soc., 42, 1958:129) added one, Ficken and Ficken (*op. cit.*) added 36, Andrew (Brit. Jour. Anim. Behav., 4, 1956:85) added four, and Hailman (Bird-Banding, 29, 1958:242) added one. In this paper 18 species are added to make a total of 147 species in 29 families of passerines for which the method of head scratching is known to me. There may be records for additional species in the writings of the Heinroths.

I have observed the following species scratching indirectly, with the leg over the wing (number of critical observations in parentheses): *Empidonax difficilis* (*vide* John Davis), *Cyanocitta stelleri* (many), *Aphelocoma coerulescens* (hundreds), *A. ultramarina* (many), *Pica nuttalli* (1), *Corvus brachyrhynchos* (2), *Psaltriparus minimus* (9), *Thryomanes bewickii* (4), *Dendroica townsendi* (1), *Wilsonia pusilla* (2), *Euphagus cyanocephalus* (1), *Carpodacus cassinii*, male (2), *Pheucticus melanocephalus* (1), *Spinus psaltria*, 13- and 15-day old nestlings (many), adult (1), *S. lawrencei* (1), *Geospiza*, sp. (several), *Pipilo fuscus* (3), *Spizella breweri* (1), and *Zonotrichia atricapilla* (1).—JERRAM L. BROWN, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, Berkeley, California, March 22, 1958.*

New Bird Records from Southeastern Oregon.—The birds listed here have been observed in the course of field work, conducted since the fall of 1955, on and near the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, Harney County, Oregon. Except for the goose observations, all of the records have been made on the Malheur Refuge, the northern end of which lies about 25 miles south of the town of Burns. The refuge, which is about 4100 feet in elevation, extends south for 40 miles to the vicinity of the town of Frenchglen.

Except where otherwise noted, these records supplement Gabrielson and Jewett's Birds of Oregon (1940).

Podiceps auritus. Horned Grebe. On June 24, 1958, Willis Keithley, Dale Hein, and the writer