

## FROM FIELD AND STUDY

**Allopreening in the Gray-barred Wren.**—Shortly after dawn on May 16, 1964, in Desierto de los Leones National Park, near México, D.F., Elliott heard the harsh chatter of wrens coming from a live oak. Sounds of a violent squabble issued from the foliage and a Gray-barred Wren (*Campylorhynchus megalopterus*) flew from the tree with another pursuing it closely. A third bird remained in the tree. A moment later a wren joined this third individual, flying in from the direction in which the first two had flown; presumably the newcomer was one of the birds that had participated in the chase. The returning bird (A) and the bird that had remained in the tree (B) then moved to a limb near the trunk.

A gave a series of rapidly delivered, harsh, chattering notes lasting two or three seconds, and B immediately crouched across the limb, dropping its tail almost perpendicular to its body and pointing its bill down at an angle of about 45°. B then fluffed its dorsal plumage and bird A began to peck and nibble at B's feathers, working from the nape down to the upper tail coverts. B remained motionless while this went on. After less than a minute, B gave a series of very low whisper notes, whereupon bird A at once jerked into an upright position, tarsi fully extended, tail depressed and fully spread, and bill pointed almost vertically upward. B, remaining crouched, sidled along the limb, very slowly raised its head, and probed very gently into bird A's fluffed out throat feathers. Neither individual made any sound. After perhaps 15 or 20 seconds the birds broke away and began to forage. A short time later a third wren, possibly the third member of the original trio, appeared and another chase ensued. Bird B again remained in the tree until the others were far down canyon and then moved to another tree. Upon the return of what was assumed to be bird A, the previous behavioral sequence was repeated without any noticeable variation.

Davis, observing at Puerto Garnica, 9200 feet elevation, in east-central Michoacán, on March 7, 1961, noted a Gray-barred Wren fly to a limb and perch quietly. After a few seconds another wren flew to the same limb and landed about two feet from the first. The newcomer moved next to the first bird and repeatedly poked its bill into the rump feathers of that bird. This went on for perhaps 30 seconds, after which the first bird flew.

In neither case was any bird seen to swallow anything. It seems likely that in the case of the birds observed by Elliott, bird A was a male and bird B a female, and that in the case observed by Davis, the active bird was a male and the passive bird a female. In both cases, pair reinforcement behavior of some sort was probably involved, elicited in the first case by the return of the presumed male after successfully driving off an intruder. Skutch (Pac. Coast Avif. No. 34, 1960:188-189), in his account of the Banded-backed Wren (*C. zonatus*), notes that two birds may indulge in mutual preening and possibly in removal of vermin. However, this type of behavior is evidently rare in the genus *Campylorhynchus*.

The occurrence of the behavior which we observed in *megalopterus*, and of the mutual preening observed in *zonatus* by Skutch, is of interest since Selander (Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool., 74, 1964:181-182) notes that *C. zonatus*, *C. megalopterus*, and *C. fasciatus* "are closely similar morphologically and in many aspects of ecology and behavior." And further, that "there is some possibility that [*C. m.*] *nelsoni* is specifically distinct from [*C. m.*] *megalopterus*, which may be more closely allied to *C. zonatus* than to *nelsoni*." Since our observations pertain to typical *megalopterus*, they may constitute further behavioral evidence for the close relationship of that form and *zonatus*.—BRUCE G. ELLIOTT, *The American Embassy, México, D.F.*, and JOHN DAVIS, *Hastings Reservation, University of California, Carmel Valley, California, December 23, 1964.* (Present address of B. G. Elliott: *Silver City, New Mexico.*)

**Notes on Behavioral Responses of the Blue-throated Hummingbird.**—In August, 1964, I observed postbreeding Blue-throated Hummingbirds (*Lampornis clemenciae*) both at hummingbird feeders and in natural situations along Cave Creek, in the Chiricahua Mountains, south of Portal, Cochise County, Arizona. Although hummingbird feeders are artificial feeding sites at which large numbers of hummingbirds tend to congregate, the feeders can be regarded as analogous to patches of wild flowers and agave blossoms, which are natural sources of food.

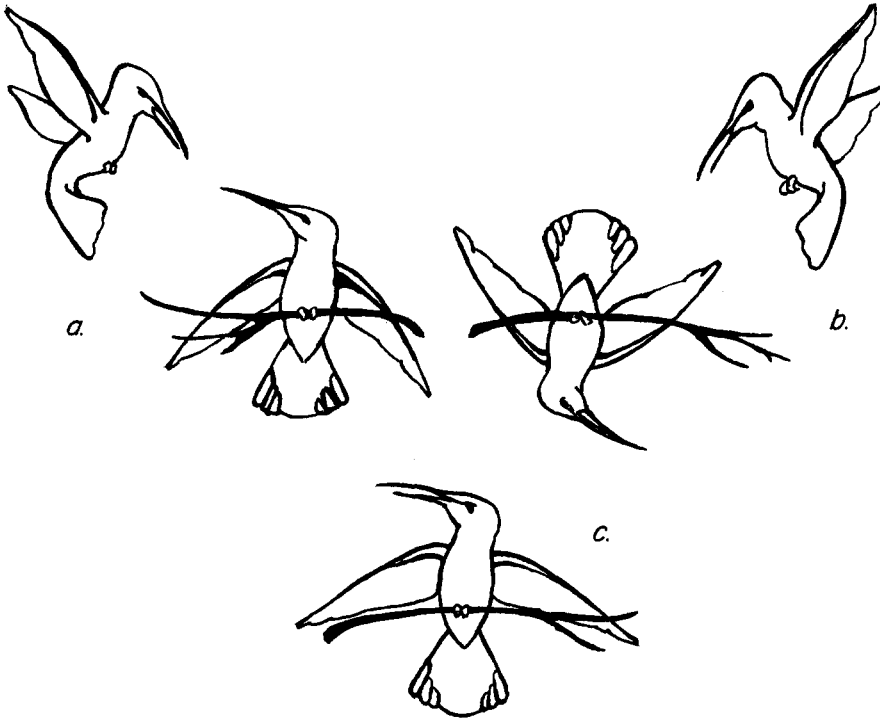


Fig. 1. Postures of the Blue-throated Hummingbird.

At feeding sites, Blue-throated Hummingbirds frequently exhibit both intraspecific and interspecific aggressive behavior. In encounters with other species of hummingbirds, Blue-throated Hummingbirds always seem to dominate. Such encounters were observed between Blue-throated Hummingbirds and Black-chinned Hummingbirds (*Archilochus alexandri*), Violet-crowned Hummingbirds (*Amazilia violiceps*), and Rivoli Hummingbirds (*Eugenes fulgens*). Once, a Blue-throated Hummingbird successfully drove a female Hooded Oriole (*Icterus cuculatus*) from a feeder.

At a feeding station maintained along Cave Creek two miles south of Portal, two male and one female Blue-throated Hummingbirds fed regularly. One of the male birds became established as dominant, although it was impossible to determine whether the dominant bird at the station was always the same individual, for none was distinctly marked. I never observed the female to be dominant.

Intraspecific aggressive encounters most frequently resulted in chases, and sometimes contact was made, but occasionally the nondominant bird offered an appeasement posture (fig. 1, *a* and *b*) instead of flying. In the commonest of these postures, *a*, the perched, nonaggressive bird kept its closed mandibles oriented toward the flying, aggressive bird, which often opened its mandibles and rapidly repeated a strident *pzeet* note. Both individuals fanned their tails, displaying the large and conspicuous white patches on the outer three rectrices (present in both sexes). A second appeasement posture, *b*, was seen twice, both times following posture *a*. In posture *b*, the nonaggressive bird turned upsidedown on its perch, fanned its rectrices in the face of the aggressive bird, and uttered faint chattering notes.

In response to posture *a*, the aggressive bird usually hovered nearby and uttered the *pzeet* note, but contact was never seen. If the nonaggressive bird maintained the posture, or assumed posture *b*, the aggressive bird perched three to ten feet away, and ceased aggressive action for the time. The aggressive bird frequently perched nearby in an aggressive posture, *c*, and uttered the *pzeet* note. Posture *c* was frequently given by the aggressive bird to passing hummingbirds in

lieu of a chase. Wagner (Veröff. Mus. Nat. Volker, Handelsk. Bremen, 2, 1951:5-44) does not mention these postures for *Lampornis clemenciae*.

It seems that postures *a* and *b* may operate to reduce the intensity of intraspecific aggressive action in Blue-throated Hummingbirds, and, in conjunction with the strikingly marked tail, these postures may be important in specific recognition. I wish to thank Myra E. Rising for the illustration.—JAMES D. RISING, *Museum of Natural History, The University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, December 10, 1964.*

**Correction of Erroneous Records of the Ash-throated Flycatcher for Northern Guatemala and Yucatán, México.**—Reporting on a collection of birds made by Harry Malleis, Van Tyne (Univ. Mich. Mus. Zool. Misc. Publ. No. 27, 1935) identified six specimens from northern Petén, Guatemala, as Ash-throated Flycatchers, *Myiarchus cinerascens cinerascens*. These included four males and two females, collected between the dates of May 16 and June 20, 1923. Subsequently, Smithe and Paynter (Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool. 128, 1963:245-324) accepted Van Tyne's identifications and asserted (p. 285) that *cinerascens* "is to be expected as a visitor at Tikal," although their extensive collecting in that section of Petén had not produced any specimens. Van Tyne's identifications seemed dubious to me, in view of the lack of any evidence that *cinerascens* breeds south of Michoacán, México. The species is known to winter regularly through the Pacific lowlands and central highlands of Central America (Lanyon, Condor, 63, 1961:421-449), but there is no evidence than any of the migrants pass through northern Guatemala. With the aid of Lester Short, I located the six specimens in question at the United States National Museum where, significantly enough, they had already been correctly reidentified by Allen Duvall as *Myiarchus tyrannulus nelsoni* [= *cooperi*], a relatively common resident throughout northern Guatemala. The proper identification of these specimens is published here in order to avert further perpetuation of this error.

Taibel (Atti Soc. ital. Sci. Nat., 94, 1955:15-84), reporting on another collection of birds made in Petén, identified a female flycatcher taken near Flores on July 17, 1932, as *cinerascens*. Although I have not seen this specimen, which is in Italy, the July collecting date makes it highly suspect. The fact that Taibel states that the measurements of his specimen are less than those given by Ridgway for *cinerascens* suggests that it may actually be the smaller *Myiarchus tuberculifer*, which would be expected at Flores in July. He collected no other *Myiarchus*. I'm grateful to Frank Smithe for calling my attention to Taibel's report.

The contention that *cinerascens* occurs in Petén, even if only as a casual visitor, would be more credible if the species had been taken elsewhere in the Yucatán peninsula. Griscom (Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist., 64, 1932) stated that *cinerascens* (p. 253) ranges "south in winter to Yucatán and Guatemala." His basis for including Yucatán within the winter range of the species was two specimens (AMNH nos. 66866, 66867) which Chapman had previously reported (Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist., 8, 1896:271-290) as *cinerascens* and which I have re-examined and find to be *Myiarchus tyrannulus cooperi*. It was these same two misidentified specimens that induced Paynter to include *cinerascens* in his Yucatán monograph (Peabody Mus. Nat. Hist., Yale Univ., Bull. 9, 1955:194). All 18 wintering specimens of *Myiarchus cinerascens cinerascens* reported on by Griscom in 1932 were from localities in southern Guatemala. I know of no specimens of *cinerascens* that have been taken to the northeast of Chiapas and the central highlands of Guatemala.—WESLEY E. LANYON, *American Museum of Natural History, New York, New York, January 12, 1965.*

**Only One Species of Galápagos Mockingbird Feeds on Eggs.**—The habit of feeding on the eggs of other birds is not widespread among small passerines, so that the interest in the eggs of seabirds displayed by the mockingbirds (*Nesomimus macdonaldi*) of Hood Island, in the Galápagos Islands, merits attention. Many ornithologists visiting Punta Cevallos on Hood Island have probably noticed this habit, but it has received scant mention in the literature. Gifford (Proc. Calif. Acad. Sci., ser. 4, 2, pt. 2, 1919:189-258) remarks that (p. 209) they "undoubtedly break eggs when the opportunity offers," but does not comment on this behavior on other islands.