

Large water-snails (referred to as *Pomacea flagellata* by Smithe, The birds of Tikal, Natural History Press, 1966) were a second item of prey taken at the water edge. A wood-rail, after finding a snail, spent from one to four minutes pounding at it on the ground before tossing the shell away and devouring the body as two separate morsels. I was able to recover the particular shell with certainty (other shells were lying about) on three occasions and found that the bird had made a hole about 0.6 cm in diameter in the side of each shell. Limpkins (*Aramus guarana*) and Everglade Kites (*Rostrhamus sociabilis*) have specially adapted bills that enable them to feed

on *Pomacea* snails with shells up to 3 cm in diameter (Snyder and Snyder, Living Bird 8:177-223, 1969) but wood-rails do not. The wood-rails did not feed on snails as regularly as the Limpkins, seemingly because they were unable to locate them well with their shorter bills.

These observations seem noteworthy as neither snakes nor pond snails have been described in previous accounts (Ripley 1977) of the food of *A. cajanea*.

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A NEST OF THE COLLARED GNATWREN (*MICROBATES COLLARIS*)

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According to Kiff (Condor 79:261-262, 1977), the nest of the Collared Gnatwren (*Microbates collaris*, Sylviidae) has not been reported. He found a cup nest near the ground for the Half-collared Gnatwren (*M. cinereiventris*). The related Long-billed Gnatwren (*Ramphocaenus melanurus*) is known to have such a nest (bibliography in Kiff 1977); we have found several similar nests of the species. While studying Amazonian birds in the forest at Reserva Ducke, near Manaus, Brazil, E. O. Willis flushed a noisy Collared Gnatwren from a nest with two eggs (Fig. 1) on 16 May 1974.

The bulky, leafy cup was 0.4 m up on a dead leaf of a thorny palmetto tuft and on crossing twigs of a *Ryania* cf. *sagotiana* Eichl. (Flacourtiaceae), under another arching palm leaf, in moderately dense undergrowth near fallen trees. The nest was well concealed, as it looked like a pile of debris. The body of the nest was of compacted rotten leaves, with leaf rachises on the outside and near the rim. The lining was of much thinner, soft, brown material, apparently rotting palm and other leaves. The nest weighed 14.2 g when dry, and measured 10 cm in outside diameter and height, 4.7 cm in internal diameter, and 4 cm in inside depth.

The two white eggs had a few small brown spots near and forming a loose wreath around their large ends. The adult was incubating on 8 of 13 visits, indicating an incubation constancy of about 60%. Fourteen days after discovery, on 30 May, the eggs hatched. The young were naked, with dark skin and pale yellow gapes, and weighed 1.6 and 1.4 g each, at 16:25. They left the nest 12-13 days afterward, as the nest had two large young on 10 June, one young on 11 June and was empty on 12 June at

18:02. When last seen, the young were large and much the color of adults.

Growth of young was rapid (Fig. 2). They peeped when measured 5-7 June but closed their eyes and huddled in the hand 8 June. Feathers were opening on 6 June, and by 10 June, the young seemed well feathered.

The nest of this gnatwren resembles that of *Ramphocaenus melanurus*, and unlike that of gnatcatchers (*Polioptila*), which supports Kiff's suggestion (1977) that gnatcatchers are not closely related to gnatwrens. However, it would be difficult for small birds to carry leafy material to treetop and edge nests such as those of gnatcatchers, and such nest cups are conspicuous away from the ground. In treetop and edge habitats near Manaus, bulky nests are mainly the leafy ovens of becards (*Pachyramphus* spp., Cotingidae). Gnatwrens and gnatcatchers could



FIGURE 1. Collared Gnatwren incubating in nest at Manaus, 21 May 1974.

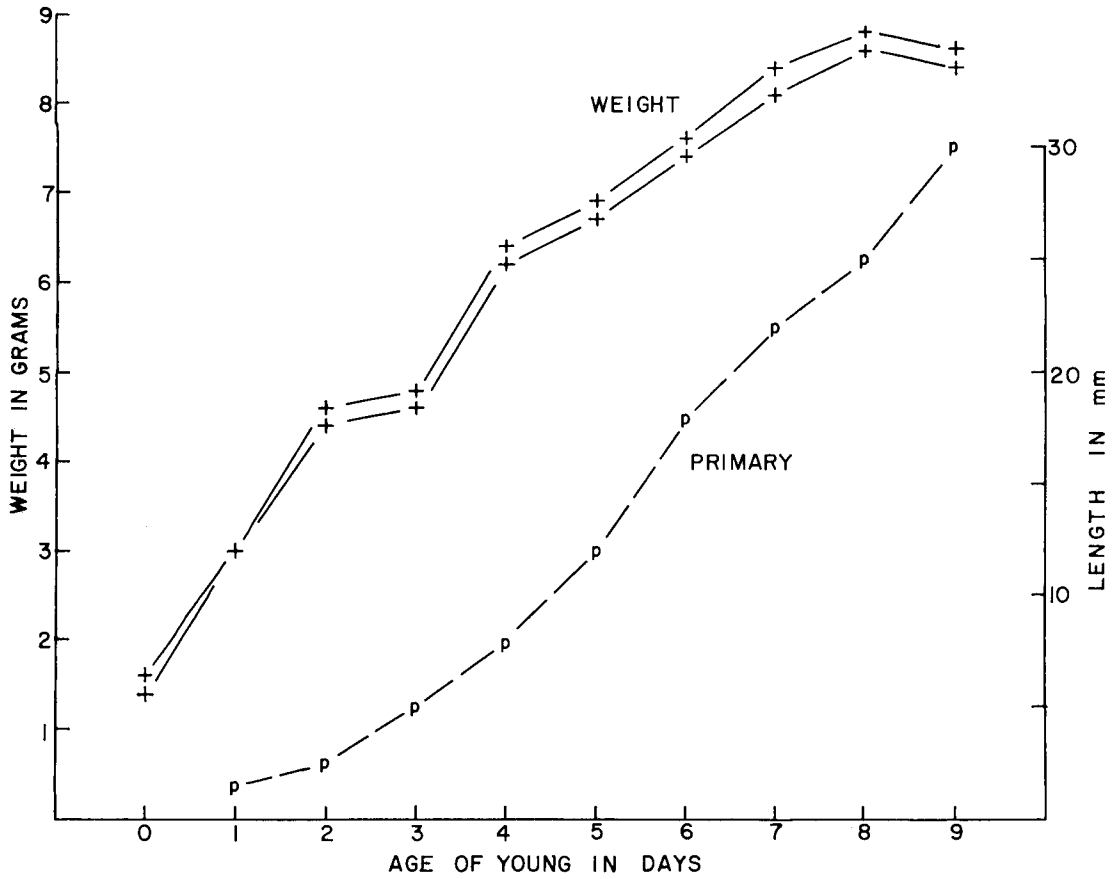


FIGURE 2. Growth of young Collared Gnatwrens in weight and in length of longest primary (no. 6; measured on one young only).

have diverged in nest type owing to different habitats, even if they had had a common ancestor.

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liam Rodrigues kindly identified the supporting plant.

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FIRST RECORD OF LEACH'S STORM-PETREL IN COSTA RICA: A CORRECTION

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A male specimen of Leach's Storm-Petrel in the United States National Museum (USNM 483222), identified as *Oceanodroma leucorhoa socorroensis* by Alexander Wetmore, was collected 27 March 1962 off Cabo Velas, Costa Rica, by W. L. Klawe of the

Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission. Professor Klawe informs me that nocturnal collecting of marine organisms was in progress while the vessel, the M/V "Independence," drifted from Cabo Velas on 26 March. Apparently, the bird flew aboard during the night, having been attracted no doubt by the ship's lights. When the bird was found in the morning, the ship's approximate position was 10°20'N, 85°59'W, some 10 km off the cape. The bird was retrieved from the crow's-nest and placed in the freezer. The measurements in mm are: wing, (arc) 148 or (chord) 141; tail, 75; fork of tail, 24; exposed culmen, 14.5; tarsus, 21.5; middle toe and claw, 22.5. A sketch of the testes on the collecting