

DOCUMENTED DOUBLE-BROODEDNESS IN RED-HEADED WOODPECKERS

DANNY J. INGOLD

Department of Biological Sciences

P.O. Drawer GY

Mississippi State University

Mississippi State, Mississippi 39762 USA

Abstract.—Double-broodedness in Red-headed Woodpeckers (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*) was confirmed in one marked pair and in seven marked individuals mated to unmarked birds during 1985–1986. Although the literature suggests that double-broodedness is common in this species, documentation has been lacking. Twenty-two unmarked pairs were apparently double-brooded since two or more nesting efforts were made in the same cavity. Thus double-broodedness may have occurred in as many as 30 of the 62 Red-headed pairs followed.

PRODUCCIÓN DE DOS CAMADAS AL AÑO POR PARTE DE *MELANERPES ERYTHROCEPHALUS*

Sinopsis.—Aunque la literatura sugiere que es común que el carpintero *Melanerpes erythrocephalus* produzca dos camadas al año, esto no había sido confirmado. Durante el 1985–1986 este hecho se documentó con una pareja de aves marcadas y 7 carpinteros marcados que se aparearon con otras aves. El 88% de las aves marcadas utilizaron la misma cavidad para criar por segunda ocasión. Veintidos aves que no pudieron ser marcadas, aparentemente también produjeron dos camadas, dado el caso de que aovaron dos veces en la misma cavidad. Es probable que 30 de las 62 parejas de carpinteros estudiadas, hayan anidado dos veces.

Double-broodedness in Red-headed Woodpeckers (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*) has been reported as a common occurrence (Bent 1939, Coues 1903, Imhof 1976, Reller 1972, Short 1982), although Jackson (1984) pointed out that documentation for double-broodedness is lacking.

During the past two years, as a result of a study of color-banded birds in Starkville, Oktibbeha County, Mississippi, I have documented double-broodedness in one marked pair and seven marked individuals mated to unmarked birds. Seven of these eight pairs (88%) used their first cavity for both nesting efforts. Dates of initiation of first and second nesting attempts and the success of these attempts are given in Table 1.

Of 13 Red-headed Woodpecker pairs with at least one banded bird, 12 (92%) were successful in their first nesting attempt, and of these, eight pairs (62%) went on to nest successfully a second time. Of 49 unmarked Red-headed Woodpecker pairs followed, 22 were apparently double-brooded since two or more nesting efforts were made in the same cavity. Of the remaining 27 pairs, the nesting status of 10 remained unknown because of the late date at which they were located. Perhaps as many as 50% of the pairs observed were double-brooded.

Also noteworthy were four unsuccessful nesting attempts between May and August 1985 by one Red-headed Woodpecker pair in which the male was marked. Their initial clutch of five eggs was abandoned when

TABLE 1. Summary of timing and success of double-brooded pairs of Red-headed Woodpeckers in Starkville, Oktibbeha County, Mississippi during the 1985-1986 breeding seasons.

Marked birds	Date clutches completed		No. young fledged/eggs	
	First	Second	First	Second
Both	13 May	12 Jul	2/6	3/4
Male	7 May	27 Jun	4/5	3/4
Male	13 May	10 Jul	3/5	3/5
Male	22 May	11 Jul	1/5	3/4
Male	23 May	15 Jul	3/5	3/5
Male	4 Jun	27 Jul	1/4	1/4
Female	14 May	4 Jul	3/6	3/5
Sex?	25 May	14 Jul	3/?	2/6

the cavity limb broke, and the latter three clutches, each consisting of four eggs, were lost to unknown causes before hatching. Bent (1939) notes the persistence of this species in its attempt to raise a brood.

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