

picked it up and swallowed it. This competition for a bit of food took place even though many other apparently equally desirable minnows were lying on the pier, illustrating how one bird's feeding activities may stimulate another's.

Apparently it is a regular practice and apparently well known locally for Sanderlings to be "hangers-on" of perch fishermen of Michigan City pier for the sake of the bait minnows that may be thrown them or left available. Presumably this habit is of recent development, for the country has been settled only about 100 years. With the larger gulls (*Larus*), belonging to a family closely related to that of the sandpipers, the habit of waiting on man for fish or fish scraps is conspicuous. With sandpipers, which eat such small items of food, one would not expect a suitable opportunity to exist often. However, it does arise occasionally, as the above account shows, and then the Sanderlings illustrated how quick birds can be to take advantage of small new factors in their environment.—A. L. RAND, *Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago 5, Illinois, December 4, 1956.*

Anting by two tanagers in Brazil.—It seems that the performance of anting by birds has not yet been reported from South America; during many years of bird study in Brazil I saw anting only twice, both cases in tanagers:

Tangara cyanicollis melanogaster Cherrie and Reichenberger.—On September 19, 1953, at Serra do Cachimbo, between Tapajós and Xingú river, State of Pará, a single bird high up in a forest tree picked up something on the branch on which it stood, and then rubbed the bill against its feathers, mostly under the wings and under the tail. Doing this, it spread its flight feathers and sometimes cocked the tail upwards in a manner very strange for a tanager. The distance was too far to see what the bird had picked up and I could not watch the unusual attitude more in detail. Knowing "anting" well from the literature, I had no doubt however, that it was the very performance J. Huxley recently designated as "one of the outstanding puzzles of ornithology." After some time I tried to shoot the bird in order to learn something about the presence of ants or some acid smell, which perhaps might have induced the mysterious behavior—but the bird managed to escape.

Tangara cyanoventris (Vieillot).—On February 1, 1955, at Mury, near Nova Friburgo, Serra do Mar, State of Rio de Janeiro, a flock of the tanagers were perched in a tree near the weekend-house where I lived. Some of the birds examined the branches in a striking manner; having found the substance for which they were looking eagerly and which was not plentiful there, they picked it up and ran their bills along the underside of the half-spread wing. Doing this, one bird raised and pivoted its wing and tucked its tail on the same side so roughly that the tailfeathers touched the branch and bent themselves. The movements were carried out very rapidly; therefore I realized the facts only after several repetitions by some of the birds. The distance did not permit me to see what the birds were looking for and what they took into their bills. I could not see if ants were really concerned. On the stump of the tree I collected some ants (*Campenotus rufipes*, *Iridomyrmex humilis*, *Brachymyrmex admotus*, *Procryptocerus* sp. and *Myrmelachista* sp.) crawling upwards or downwards the tree—but I cannot say if one of these insects reached the canopy where the tanagers stayed and if the birds used the ants performing the curious behavior observed.

Such records made at a distance can supply little in the discussion of the difficult problem of anting and I have no suggestion to make as to the biological function of this strange instinctive activity. But the fact that these observations were made in the wild seems to rectify the publication—while most of the statements on this behavior are real-

ized in studying tame birds. The principal facts shown by the two Brazilian tanagers are: (1) the desirous seeking of the stimulants, which suggests that the birds were deliberately anting in order to indulge the process (*T. cyanoventris*) and (2) the ecstasy shown by the anting bird (*T. cyanicollis*). In *T. cyanicollis* it was interesting, too, that the bird cocked the tail over the back, while it is generally stated that anting birds bring the tail forwards, as I also saw in *T. cyanoventris*.—HELMUT SICK, *Fundação Brasil Central, Av. Nilo Peçanha 23 III, Rio de Janeiro, D.F. Brazil, September 7, 1956.*