

## GENERAL NOTES

**Hérons leaving the water to defecate.**—Watching herons fish in Gwynns Falls, a shallow stream about 25 yards wide, at Woodlawn, Baltimore County, Maryland, I have noticed that when they need to defecate both the Common Egret (*Casmerodius albus*) and the Snowy Egret (*Leucophoyx thula*) leave the water to do so, going onto rocks or mud bars in the stream or onto the bank. Then they reenter the water and resume their fishing.

I have 12 records of Common Egrets leaving the water to defecate, and 9 of the birds then at once reentered the stream and resumed fishing; another returned merely to the brink and fished on from there; 2 stayed ashore. I have 10 records for the Snowy Egret (3 for one bird during a single period of watching); on 9 of the occasions an immediate return into the water was made. In contrast, I have never seen a bird of either species defecate in the stream, although on an 11th occasion a Snowy Egret which went from the water onto a mud bar defecated at its edge, some of the excrement going into the stream. The dates have been 25 July to 16 September 1954 to 1964.

Possibly the Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) also has this habit. On 5 November a Great Blue that was fishing in or at the edge of an arm of the Falls just a few yards wide—tall weeds blocked my view—went high up on the opposite bank, defecated, then stayed there. The only record of this behavior that I have found for any heron is one by Utley (1942. *Naturalist*, No. 801:104) for the Common Heron (*Ardea cinerea*) of England, the counterpart of our Great Blue.—HERVEY BRACKBILL, 2620 Poplar Drive, Baltimore, Maryland, 20 September 1965.

**Distributional notes on Costa Rican birds.**—While associated with the Louisiana State University School of Medicine and its International Center for Medical Research and Training in Costa Rica from September 1964 through August 1965, I obtained significant distributional data on several species of birds. All specimens are on deposit in the Louisiana State University Museum of Zoology.

*Ixobrychus exilis*. Least Bittern.—Two individuals were repeatedly flushed from a shallow, grassy marsh on the experimental finca of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cattle Industry on Hacienda Taboga, 12 km S of Cañas, province of Guanacaste, on 6 August. There are few records for this species in Costa Rica according to Slud (1964. *Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.*, 128:43).

*Milvago chimachima*. Yellow-headed Caracara.—On 12 June I shot a female (ovaries not enlarged) as it perched in a tree alongside the road 3.2 km E of Golfito, province of Puntarenas. This record is the first for the species north of Panamá.

*Amaurolimnas concolor*. Uniform Crane.—A female (15-mm ovum in oviduct) was obtained on 13 July in a palm swamp approximately 1.2 km N of Los Chiles de Grecia, province of Alajuela. Slud (op. cit.:82) says that this rail has been taken at only six Costa Rican localities.

*Panyptila cayennensis*. Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift.—This species is listed by Slud (op. cit.:142) on the basis of sight reports but no specimens. On 1 May I collected two specimens from a flock of swifts (*Chaetura spinicauda* and *C. vauxi*) on the Río Damitas, 14.5 km N of Quepos, province of San José. There were four other individuals of *P. cayennensis* in the flock. The two individuals obtained are a female (ovary enlarged) and a male (testes: left, 9 × 7 mm; right, 7 × 5 mm).

*Thryothorus maculipectus*. Spot-breasted Wren.—A male (testes: left, 8 × 4 mm; right, 6 × 4 mm) collected on 11 July approximately 1.2 km N of Los Chiles de Grecia,