

as a representative of the subspecies *R. l. saturatus*. To my knowledge this is the first record of this subspecies in Mexico, and the first record of any Clapper Rail in Tamaulipas (Friedmann et al., Pacific Coast Avifauna no. 29, 1950; Dickerman, Wilson Bull. 83:49-56, 1971). The A.O.U. Check-list of North American Birds (1957) indicates that the range of *saturatus* extends along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico from Alabama to Brownsville, Texas. Whether this bird was a stray from slightly farther north or a member of an unreported resident population is not known, but there is no intrinsic reason why the range of this coastal subspecies should not extend beyond the international boundary.—RICHARD C. BANKS, *Division of Wildlife Research, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Washington, D.C. (mailing address: National Museum of Natural History, Washington, D.C. 20560)*. Accepted 29 August 1973.

A possible "assist" to a hatching chick by an adult Whimbrel.—At the nest of a Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*) under prolonged observation near Churchill, Manitoba, in July 1967, I observed a sequence of events that seem to represent an "assist" to a hatching chick by the incubating adult. The egg in question pipped about 48 hours prior to the "assist," during which time the other three eggs hatched and the chicks remained in the vicinity of the nest scrape. In the 39 hours after the egg first pipped, a crack about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide and halfway around the short axis of the shell developed. After 43 hours the adult Whimbrel moved the egg out of the scrape with a series of pushes from its bill, eventually leaving it about 8 to 10 inches from the nest. The bird pushed the egg about as far as it could stretch its neck without leaving the sitting position. The crack in the egg remained on top throughout this movement. The egg then remained outside the scrape in this position for 5 hours. From the blind I could see that occasionally the chick moved and the egg shook slightly. I could not hear any sound from the egg, but the wind was from the blind toward the scrape. After the 5 hour period the adult stood up and stepped over to the egg. Facing the scrape, the adult pushed and rolled the egg back to the nest; the egg rolled over completely once. The adult turned to face into the wind, started to sit down, but then stood again and very carefully inserted its bill into the crack in the egg, opening the mandibles as it did so. For about 2 minutes the adult repeatedly moved its bill along the crack, periodically opening the mandibles and seeming to pry at the crack during the process. The adult moved its body as well as its bill. After the "assist" the adult tucked the egg in with the chicks in the nest and sat down again. An hour later the adult took a single piece of shell out of the scrape and deposited it a short distance to the side. This piece of shell represented about a third of the long axis on one side and half on the other. After another hour, the adult stood up and walked off with this piece of shell. Then the bird came back, picked up another piece of shell from the scrape and flew off with it. This second piece of shell appeared to represent the reciprocal portion of the entire eggshell in comparison with the first fragment. Inspection of the nest during absence of the adult showed one wet chick and 3 dry ones. I left at that time, making a brief search of the area to which I had seen the adult carry the first shell fragment. I was not able to find it, so no inspection could be made that might have shown that the shell was abnormal in some way. A more extensive search was not made as this could have kept the adult from returning to brood the wet chick. The next morning 2 adults and 4 apparently normal chicks were in the area. Shell fragments were again sought, but could not be found.

I have never seen such a prolonged insertion of the bill into the crack of a hatching

egg by a shorebird, nor have I seen opening of the mandibles repeatedly in the crack of a hatching egg. It is not uncommon for an adult of many species of shorebirds to put the bill close in a sort of inspection of a hatching egg, but such inspections ordinarily last only 5 or 10 seconds and do not involve actual contact.—MARY M. TREMAINE, *Dept. of Medical Microbiology, University of Nebraska Medical Center, Omaha, Nebraska 68105. Accepted 18 September 1973.*

Sunbathing in the Streamertail Hummingbird.—Sunbathing is a widespread avian behavior, but is apparently unreported for the large New World family of hummingbirds, Trochilidae (*Brit. Birds*, 62:249-258, 1969). On 14 July 1973 I was taking feeding notes on birds in the Blue Mountains, Jamaica, at an elevation of about 5,000 feet, near Newcastle and the Clydesdale Forest Reserve. At noon a male Streamertail Hummingbird (*Trochilus polytmus*), which had been foraging within 12 feet of me, perched in a small tree and began sunbathing. The bird widely spread the wings and tail (with the primaries almost touching the outer rectrices), holding them motionless and perpendicu-

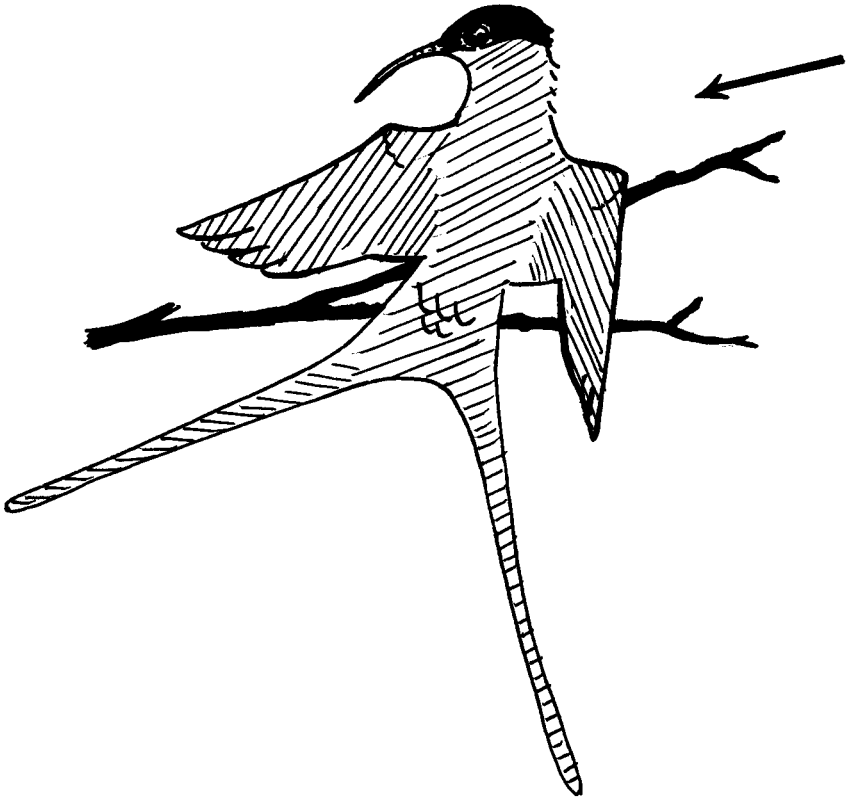


FIG. 1. Sunbathing posture of the Streamertail Hummingbird. The arrow shows the direction of the sun's rays.