mating system respectively. *Tryngites* departs from the classical lek situation in that territories tend to be larger and the locations of display grounds may change between years. Our observations support this interpretation of *Tryngites*' breeding behavior.

Parmelee et al. (1967) reported that display areas were abandoned on Jenny Lind Island, N.W.T., and that displaying males would suddenly appear in new locations. It is possible that such shifts could explain the short display period observed at the Firth River. However, since we did not find displaying males in other locations after 7 June, despite visits by several observers over a wide area of similar habitat, we conclude that the display period was very brief in 1972. The early departure of males from breeding habitat is probably adaptive in that it would increase food resources available for the female and young and reduce activity near nests which might attract predators (cf. Pitelka, Condor 61:233–264, 1959).

The conspicuous light flash from the waving exposed underwing surface has been remarked upon by others (Parmelee et al. 1967, Pitelka et al. 1974). This feature was particularly striking during the twilight hours typical of the latitude at Firth River in early June. The flashing was visible at long distances and, as Parmelee et al. (1967) pointed out, drew attention to birds that otherwise would have been overlooked. Pitelka et al. (1974) suggested that the wing flashing might serve an important locator function to females since display grounds change location from year to year. If the display period is normally as short as indicated by our observations, this function would assume added importance.

The occurrence of display associated with pairing, both in flocks on migration and leks on the breeding ground, invites further speculation. An important function of lek behavior apparently is to ensure that a few particularly "fit" males fertilize most females (Tinbergen, pp. 375–378 *in* D. A. Bannerman, The birds of the British Isles, Vol. 9. Oliver and Boyd, London, 1960). The less than two weeks of display of Buff-breasted Sandpipers at the Firth River in 1972 is much shorter than the display period of the Ruff and other lek species (Tinbergen 1960). Although the spring of 1972 was abnormally delayed, short summers at this latitude would preclude long periods for display on the leks even in normal years; this time conceivably could be too brief to permit the establishment of stable relationships among males and to ensure the fertilization of females. If this is so, the same groups of birds might maintain their association throughout spring migration to the breeding ground, constituting a "moving lek." The desirability of more systematic study of the breeding behavior and ecology of the Buff-breasted Sandpiper is obvious.

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Sandhill Cranes feeding on ducklings.—On 8 July 1972 while watching a pair of Sandhill Cranes (*Grus canadensis*) at Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, Harney Co., Oregon, I saw an adult male crane kill and eat a 1- to 5-day-old Gadwall (*Anas strepera*) duckling.

I first saw the cranes at 17:40 sitting near the north shore of Boca Lake. At 18:36

the male stood and watched a brood of Gadwalls about 50 m offshore. At 18:37 he flew directly to the brood, landed among the young, and instantly grabbed a duckling. He shook and speared the young bird into several pieces. As the male crane ate the pieces, the female walked over and ate with him. All the remains were eaten by 18:45. The male drank briefly, then the pair walked to the shore.

In July 1962 a member of the refuge staff watched a male catch and eat a young Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*). The crane approached the brood from the rear, caught one young, violently shook it 2 or 3 times, and swallowed it intact. This incident occurred in a meadow in about 5 to 7 cm of water. R. C. Drewien (pers. comm.) has seen Sandhill Cranes consume young Mallards and Green-winged Teal (*Anas crecca*) near Grays Lake, Bonneville Co., Idaho.

Mullins (M.S. thesis, Univ. Idaho, 1974) collected 20 Greater Sandhill Cranes in southeastern Idaho and reported on their stomach contents. Plant material comprised 73% of the diet, and insects and earthworms accounted for 27%. No remains of eggs or young birds were found. Harvey et al. (Wilson Bull. 80:421–425, 1968) found that Lesser Sandhill Cranes (*G. c. canadensis*) readily fed on Snow Goose (*Anser hyperborea*) eggs and Willow Ptarmigan (*Lagopus lagopus*) chicks. Walkinshaw (The Sandhill Cranes, Cranbrook Inst. Sci. Bull. 29, 1949) also reported on the food habits of Sandhill Cranes, but none of these reports mention ducklings in their diet.

The importance of young ducks as a food source for cranes is unknown, but crane predation on ducklings would normally go undetected because vegetation height restricts visibility and prevents close observation at the time of duck hatching.—CARROLL D. LITTLEFIELD, *U.S. Fish & Widllife Service, Box 671, Burns, OR 97720.* *Accepted 25 July 1975.*

Successful parasitism of the Gray Catbird by the Brown-headed Cowbird.—The Gray Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*) is considered a poor host species for the Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*) because it normally ejects cowbird eggs from its nest (Rothstein, Auk 91:796–807, 1974). Thus the following record is of interest. On 12 June 1971 I found a catbird incubating 3 catbird eggs and 1 cowbird egg. On 15 June the nest contained a down-covered cowbird and 3 catbird eggs. On 19 June there was a large cowbird nestling and a small, nearly naked young catbird; the other 2 catbird eggs had disappeared. On 23 June the feathered cowbird was sitting on the dead catbird nestling. On 29 June the nest was empty, and the adult catbirds were scolding vigorously, as they had on all visits, suggesting that the young cowbird was in the vicinity.

The nest was 1.2 m above the ground in a clump of mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*) located in a 0.8–1.2 ha wood lot in a residential area near Takoma Park, Montgomery Co., Maryland. Canopy trees were mainly white oak (*Quercus alba*). There was little herbaceous understory but many clumps of 1.5–1.8 m mountain laurel shrubs.

Two previous reports give specific information on young cowbirds in catbird nests. Nickell (Wilson Bull. 70:286–287, 1958) found a nest in Ontario that contained two 6- to 7-day-old catbirds and a cowbird 1 or 2 days older. The second report (Auk 79:116–117, 1962) concerned a Michigan catbird nest containing 4 catbird eggs and 1 cowbird egg. That cowbird egg hatched, but the nest was subsequently destroyed by a predator. Later in the same vicinity, catbirds were seen feeding a young cowbird and 3 fledgling catbirds. Another record appears erroneous. Elder (Bird Lore 23:185–191, 1921) states that catbirds frequently rear 1 or 2 of their own young in addition to 1 or more cowbirds. A careful reading of Elder's paper indicates that this statement probably refers to the Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*).—JOAN C. WOODWARD, *2433 Southgate Square, Reston, VA 22091.* *Accepted 30 May 1975.*