

I visited the beach at least 10 times during 3 days and saw Common Terns catching crabs each time. On all visits I saw only 2 Common Terns over the water; neither was seen diving.

I spent 3 to 5 August 1973 on Bogue Bank, Carteret Co., North Carolina, and again observed Common Terns catching mole crabs on all of 7 visits to the beach. A few Common Terns were observed over the water, and one was seen plunging into the water, but most birds were hunting crabs. The crabs were almost as abundant as on Ocracoke Island.

I have visited the Carolina coast frequently in the past 7 years, and in the last 4 years 2 of my graduate students have been studying tern behavior. These observations of Common Terns capturing mole crabs are remarkable because we have not seen the behavior before, and because almost all Common Terns seen were catching crabs. Common Terns are known to feed on *Emerita* (Palmer, Proc. Bost. Soc. Nat. Hist. 42:1-119, 1941), but my observations appear to be unique because apparently most if not all Common Terns were feeding largely if not entirely on mole crabs over a wide area and for a period of at least 2 weeks.

Common Terns usually feed on fish, and heavy predation on crustaceans has been correlated with low availability of fish (Langham, Ph.D. thesis, Univ. Durham, 1968). I saw Least Terns feeding on fish while Common Terns were feeding exclusively on mole crabs. I suggest that the unusual abundance of relatively small mole crabs provided an easily obtained and sufficient diet for the terns. Mole crabs are relatively easy to capture but it seems unlikely that searching for crabs at normal population levels would result in sufficient captures to justify the effort. Fully grown mole crabs are probably too large for easy handling by Common Terns. My observations suggest that Common Terns can shift normal feeding behavior to exploit an unusual food source. The switch from a normal, essentially exclusive, fish diet to mole crabs is consonant with L. Tinbergen's specific searching image hypothesis (Arch. Neerl. Zool. 13:265-343, 1960).—HELMUT C. MUELLER, Dept. of Zoology and Curriculum in Ecology, Univ. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill 27514. Accepted 6 Nov. 1974.

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

Owl bibliography.—"A working bibliography on the Order Strigiformes (Aves) from the world literature" is the title of a bibliography currently being compiled by R. J. Clark, D. G. Smith and L. H. Kelso. Particularly sought are articles appearing in local journals and sportsmen publications. Faunal lists, however, will not be included. The bibliography attempts to cover the world literature and distribution of it will also be worldwide. *All* reprints received prior to 1 July 1977 and dealing with owls *will* appear in the bibliography. No guarantee for reprints received after this date can be made. To insure inclusion of your work please send 2 reprints of each article to:

Owl Bibliography, c/o Richard J. Clark, Department of Biology, York College of Pennsylvania, York, Pennsylvania 17405.