

an hour of low tide and those trips that were made at other times occurred either before the mussel bed was washed by waves or during tides of short range and high surf when there was little opportunity for the birds to forage safely.

No attempts were made to follow the birds and I can only assume that foraging was better in the areas they headed for. Certainly large mussels were not available in their feeding territories when they were observed to bring such items back on these trips. While the energetic advantages of such trips seem questionable, such trips appear to be a normal part of the activities of breeding oystercatchers. The significance and relationship of these trips to the general dispersion patterns of the species must remain in question.—E. B. HARTWICK, *Dept. of Biological Sciences, Simon Fraser Univ., Burnaby, B.C. V5A 1S6.*

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**Screech Owl predation on a Common Flicker nest.**—Two cypress Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*) nesting boxes (3 m above ground level and facing opposite directions) erected on the same creosote pole at Pearl River Waterfowl Refuge in Mississippi, were selected by a red phase Screech Owl (*Otus asio*) and a Common Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*) as nest sites in April 1977. The owl laid 2 eggs and was incubating them in 1 nest box when the flicker began laying a series of 6 eggs in the other box. The owlets hatched just before the flicker young did. The owl fed the owlets other food items until she discovered the flickers in the next box. Five babies had hatched and begged constantly. The owl flew into the flickers' nest box and removed the young birds 1 by 1 to feed her owlets. This process took several days. The flickers continued during this time to feed their surviving young. Not until all flicker young were taken by the owl did they fail to return to the nest box. Half-eaten flickers were found in the owl nest box.—MARY C. LANDIN, *USAE Waterways Experiment Station, Vicksburg, MS 39180. Accepted 6 Oct. 1977.*

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**Red Bobwhites in Oklahoma.**—On 2 September 1973, I collected an erythristic female Bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*) 3 km NE of Southard (Blaine Co.), west-central Oklahoma. Its plumage was deep chestnut-red except for 3 white feathers on the central upper chest (= "crop patch") and black markings as follows: median crown feathers almost totally black, nape feathers moderately so; upper wing coverts, chest and belly feathers mottled; flank feathers heavily barred; tertials and upper rump feathers with wide, irregular subterminal bands; upper tail coverts with black narrowly bordering rachis on either side; under tail coverts heavily mottled, especially toward the center; legs and bill black. Rectrices, primaries, and secondaries were solid brownish-gray.

Little subcutaneous fat was found during skinning, yet the bird weighed 183.5 g. Average weight of 8 adult females in the University of Oklahoma collection was 174.2 g, so the specimen appeared to be healthy. The single intrauterine egg measured 26 × 20 mm (fully developed eggs (n = 59) in the U.S. National Museum averaged 30 × 24 mm [Bent, U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull. 162, 1932]). Measurements were: wing 114, tail 61, culmen

15, and tarsus 30 mm. The specimen is in the Cameron University collection (CUMZ 465).

The red quail was in a covey with 6 or 7 normally-colored Bobwhites in a sumac (*Rhus* sp.) thicket along a railroad right-of-way. Permian Red-bed soils here were deeply eroded, exposing numerous gypsum outcroppings, and covered by overgrazed midgrasses (primarily Little Bluestem, *Andropogon scoparius*), scattered mesquites (*Prosopis juliflora*), and redcedar (*Juniperus virginiana*). Plum (*Prunus* sp.) and sumac were common in low areas.

George Wint, long-time director of the state game farm, was unaware of any released red quail in Oklahoma during the past (pers. comm.), and the landowner likewise knew of no such releases on or near his property.

During the third week of November 1973 a covey of 6 Bobwhites containing 2 red birds appeared in the W. B. Wise yard in Norman (Cleveland Co.). They remained in the area throughout winter and were last seen about 15 April 1974. Color photos on file in the Cameron Museum clearly show their chestnut color, white crop patches, and black legs and bills.

Crosses with captive red Bobwhites near Thomasville, Georgia from 1934-1936 indicated that the red color is incompletely dominant and not sex-linked (Cole et al., Auk 66:28-35, 1949).

Buckle (Am. Field 107:444, 1927) described a pair of red quail collected near Grand Junction, Tennessee from a covey of 15 or 20 containing 7 red birds (Stoddard, The Bobwhite Quail, Chas. Scribner's Sons, N.Y., 1931:86), and Aldrich (Auk 65:493-508, 1946) summarized early red Bobwhite records in the U.S. In all cases, however, specimens were either of the northeastern race (*C. v. marilandicus*) or the eastern race (*C. v. mexicanus*); measurements and geographic location suggest that the Oklahoma birds are assignable to *C. v. taylori*, the Great Plains race from which erythrism has apparently not been reported (Aldrich, op. cit.).—JACK D. TYLER, Dept. of Biology, Cameron Univ., Lawton, OK 73501. Accepted 3 Aug. 1976.

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**Asynchrony of hatching in Red-winged Blackbirds and survival of late and early hatching birds.**—Lack (Ibis 89:302-352, 1947) argued that the asynchrony of hatching observed in various birds of prey could reduce the loss of nestlings during a food shortage. The last born young are put at a competitive disadvantage that insures their demise and leaves the remaining young with sufficient food for development. That these birds of prey begin incubation before the clutch is complete and that the last born young do starve except when food is plentiful support this hypothesis. Lack suggested that such a brood reduction after hatching would be primarily of value to species with long fledging periods that are not subject to high rates of nest predation. Runting and brood reduction have however been observed in numerous, small passerines including the Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) (Holcomb and Twiest, Bird-Banding 42:1-17, 1971), and so too incubation before the completion of the clutch (Holcomb, *Wilson Bull.* 87:450-460, 1974). Data I collected during the spring of 1976 from a population of marsh nesting Red-winged Blackbirds in the LaRue Swamp, Union County, Illinois further document the relationship between hatching rank and nestling survival.