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Notes on the foraging behavior of the Zigzag Heron.—The only recent field observations reported for the poorly known Zigzag Heron (*Zebriulus undulatus*) (Hancock and Kushlan, *Herons Handbook*, Croom Helm, London, 1984) are those of Davis et al. (*Condor* 82:460–461, 1981). Here we report on a bird watched intermittently by NJCM for about 13 h between 8 and 30 August 1985 at an oxbow lake with open swamp forest in the Tambopata Nature Reserve (12°49'S, 69°18'W) near Puerto Maldonado, Madre de Dios Department, Peru. Its primaries were slatey-black as described by Blake (*Manual of Neotropical Birds*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1977) and not noticeably blue as shown in Haverschmidt (*Birds of Surinam*, Oliver & Boyd, Edinburgh, 1968). Its posture resembled that shown by Haverschmidt (1968) and Davis et al. (1981) more accurately than that illustrated by Hancock and Kushlan (1984).

Principal periods of activity during the 14 days on which the heron was observed were before 11:00 and between 15:30 and 17:30. On three occasions, the bird was found around midday quietly perched 5–10 m up in a forest tree some 30 m from the water. The bird foraged from branches overhanging the water, from the emergent roots of swamp trees, and while in the water. It hopped along low branches of swamp trees or partly submerged logs moving its tail, apparently for balance. Tail-flicking described by Davis et al. (1981) was frequently seen during feeding bouts but not in their context of nervous preening. During preening bouts, the heron scratched its head directly with its left foot, and flicked its tail a few times.

When the heron saw possible prey it appeared tense and started to flick its tail from side to side. If the prey moved away, the bird relaxed and ceased tail movements. If the prey did not move away, the usual consequence was the adoption of a more horizontal stance on the branch. The neck was gradually extended as the bird leaned forward on its perch preparatory to a diving strike. If the prey was immediately below the bird and the bird was perched more than 0.5 m above the water, the elongated bird would reach a position of hanging head downwards. The tail was then depressed to “clasp” the perch. Thereafter the bird dove at its prey, partially immersing itself in the water. When perched at water level or just above it, the vertical hanging was omitted and the tail was not used as a “clasp.”

On one occasion, the heron stood in a tangle of branches in the bittern-posture and caught flying insects, probably dragonflies (Odonata). Once the bird struck at prey while it was standing in water up to its abdomen. In addition, small prey items were seized by pecking into the water while wading slowly or standing still. During unsuccessful strikes at prey, the bill often impaled dead leaves floating in the water. These were removed by vigorously beating the bill against branches.

Of 15 strikes at aquatic prey, four (26%) were successful. The prey were fish ca 5 cm long (the length of the bill). After capturing a fish, the heron carried it to a perch, manipulated

it and swallowed it head-first. An armoured catfish (Callichthyidae) was found with typical heron-inflicted injuries.

On one occasion, the heron was surprised in a thicket. It rapidly hopped away through the tangle, giving an alarm call: a high pitched *kreeik* which soon degenerated to *krik*.

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