

thus not edible. The stimulus to brood the egg might have then overcome the stimulus to eat it and incubation was then begun. I suspect that these were immature birds as they did not lay eggs of their own during the breeding season. Unfortunately the ages of the birds were not determined.

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SUNBATHING SWALLOWS ?

Recently an interesting incident concerning the Welcome Swallow (*Hirundo neoxena*) was related to me by an Eketahuna farmer, Mr R. Waldman. In his district the swallow is a new arrival and it was he who noticed the birds' unusual habit of "sunning."

Six swallows were watched for often an hour at a time on a lawn just in front of the Waldman's house. The swallows would lie on their sides, one wing extended, tail fanned out and head back apparently lapping up the sun. This behaviour has been seen several times by Mr Waldman and might be related to the extreme tameness of the swallows living near the house and outbuildings.

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HOUSE SPARROW PLUCKING BARBARY DOVE

Bird watching in the garden has its surprises, however common the species. A few days ago I was puzzled when I saw a House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) making darts at a Barbary Dove (*Streptopelia risoria*) perched on a power line outside the house. The dove avoided the sparrow on this occasion by flying a few feet. This morning, 21 January 1974, my wife saw a sparrow pluck several

feathers from a dove on the wire and fly off with them. A few minutes later we both saw the plucking repeated. The sparrow, after alighting on the line a few feet from the dove, made a sudden dart towards the base of the dove's tail and returned with several feathers in its bill and then flew off across the street, evidently to its nest. The same tactics were repeated again shortly afterwards, the sparrow being a male bird.

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CHINSTRAP PENGUIN AT CAPE HALLETT

From 30 December 1972 to 13 January 1973 a Chinstrap Penguin (*Pygoscelis antarctica*) was observed and photographed at Hallett Station, Antarctica (72°19'S, 170°13'E), a penguin rookery of about 100,000 breeding Adelie Penguins (*Pygoscelis adeliae*) and 60-100 South Polar Skuas (*Catharacta maccormicki*). The Chinstrap would stay near colonies of the Adelies when on land, but would leave every day or two for a few hours, presumably to feed at sea. It appeared to be in good physical condition with no signs of external anomalies. No positive sex determination was made.

The bird was very pugnacious, taking over nest scrapes of Adelies and stealing stones from the surrounding birds with apparent ease. During the early part of the stay fighting frequently broke out between the Chinstrap and Adelies with the Chinstrap usually winning and claiming the defeated birds' territories. It never stayed on one scrape long, however. Altogether it occupied four Adelie colonies and claimed at least nine scrapes during its 15 day visit.

Watson (1971) and Sladen (1964) give no reports of the Chinstrap Penguin ever having been found on Cape Hallett, but Muller-Schwarze (1967) gives account of a Chinstrap at Hallett Station on 10 January 1965, and one was sighted by E. Gless (Montana College of Mineral Science and Technology, Butte, Montana — personal communication) in February 1968. Hence, the present report represents the third sighting of a Chinstrap Penguin at Cape Hallett and the only sighting during the last five years.

This observation was made while I was engaged in work supported by the NSF Antarctic Research Program Grant No. GA 23744 to John R. Baker of Iowa State University.

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