

---

January 1975

## Ruddy Turnstones Feeding on Coconuts

Florida Field Naturalist

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/ffn>

---

### Recommended Citation

Florida Field Naturalist (1975) "Ruddy Turnstones Feeding on Coconuts," *Florida Field Naturalist*. Vol. 3 : Iss. 2 , Article 10.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/ffn/vol3/iss2/10>

This Field Notes is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. It has been accepted for inclusion in Florida Field Naturalist by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@usf.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@usf.edu).

havior was distinctly different from that in April. They called only twice during about one hour while I was near them, and they remained visible for only short periods and generally acted very secretly. On 25 May I did not find any anis in the area. I suggest that breeding actually occurred some distance from this site and that the birds were moving through the region when I found them in mid-April.

Mr. A.L. Dougherty provided access to his property and generously supported these observations. G.E. Woolfenden kindly improved the manuscript.—*Ralph W. Schreiber, Department of Biology, University of South Florida, Tampa, Fla. 33620.*

### Ruddy Turnstones Feeding on Coconuts

On 3 April 1975, while censusing pelicans on the beach at Naples, Florida, I observed 8 Ruddy Turnstones (*Arenaria interpres*) feeding on the meat of a coconut. They were feeding from an unhusked coconut that had been halved lengthwise. The coconut was above the high-tide line on a section of beach frequented by people. I assume that the coconut was left the day before, as the turnstones were observed feeding at 0700 EDT.

When first observed, one turnstone seemed to be resting on the coconut; then it jumped off and ran down the beach. A few seconds later another turnstone jumped onto the coconut and pecked inside it from 2 to 3 minutes. This procedure was repeated by 7 other turnstones within a span of 30 minutes. One turnstone dislodged a piece of coconut meat about the size of a dime, hopped off the coconut, and was chased by 2 other turnstones. The first bird then proceeded to eat the coconut meat in my full view. Upon examining the coconut I found that most of the meat was gone and that what remained was perforated by peck marks.

Few other references to fruit-feeding by Ruddy Turnstones have been found. Richard Pough (1951. Audubon Water Bird Guide, Doubleday & Co., Garden City, N.Y.) stated on page 216 that "although small mollusks, crustacea, and insects are staples, turnstones are quick to take advantage of a variety of items. In various places, especially in the Arctic, they eat quantities of berries, climbing about in bushes to get them." A.C. Bent (1928. Life Histories of North American Shorebirds, U.S. National Museum Bull. 146:287) referred to Manniche's statement that the species feeds "mainly on vegetable food" just after arriving in Greenland. Paul Bartsch (1922. A visit to Midway Island. *Auk*, 39: 481-488) found them feeding on berries in "dense *Scaevola* thickets" on Midway Island in November.—*T.H. Below, P.O. Box 554, Naples, Fla. 33490.*