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First Gulf Coast Record of the Bar-tailed Godwit

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On 5 June 1983 in marshes around the Papaloapan River in the state of Veracruz, Mexico, we found another Red-winged Blackbird nest containing three young rodents that we identified as rice rats. The nest was constructed of grasses and was approximately 2 meters above the ground in cattails (*Typha* sp.). We found the nest after it had been abandoned by the Red-winged Blackbird and therefore could not determine its status when taken over by the rats. The nest had been altered in the same manner as the Florida nest. When we visited the nest the next day, the rats were still there.

Bancroft (1983) noted that rice rats usurped the nests of Boat-tailed Grackles (*Quiscalus major*) and that rats accounted for a large portion of the egg and nestling predation at some of his study sites. Kale (1965) also noted that nestling Marsh Wrens (*Cistothorus palustris*) were occasionally taken by rice rats, though he did not describe instances of wren nests being used by rats for nesting. The occurrence of this nest usurpation in different bird species and in two widely separated locales indicates that this behavior may be a common activity of rice rats. In any event, these represent interesting cases of interspecific nest use.

These observations were made while we were working on research projects funded by the National Geographic Society and the National Science Foundation (DEB 7922995) through grants to F. C. James. We thank an anonymous reviewer for helpful comments.

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- Cathleen C. NeSmith and James Cox, Dept. of Biological Sciences, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida, 32306.

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First Gulf Coast record of the Bar-tailed Godwit.—On 23 April 1983, the authors and Steve Howell observed a Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) on a sand spit opposite the Florida State University Marine Lab near Turkey Point, Franklin County, Florida. The godwit rested with a flock of 15 Marbled Godwits (*L. fedoa*) and 45 Willets (*Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*) near the high tide line. We observed it under excellent light conditions (1400) with binoculars and spotting scope at distances down to 15 m for 10 minutes. We then deliberately flushed the bird to observe its wing and tail pattern. The bird was in basic plumage and the following field marks were noted and discussed during the observation period: (1) "obvious" godwit bill, slightly upturned,

dark distally, dull pink proximally; (2) short stature compared to nearby Marbled Godwits, about the size of the largest Willets (probably western race) present in the flock; (3) dorsally streaked, not barred; (4) venter very pale grayish-buff with a darker wash across breast; (5) wing linings white, not black, gray or cinnamon; (6) rump pale, tail finely barred; (7) no wing stripe; (8) legs dark gray. This combination of field marks eliminates other godwits and all other shorebird species from consideration.

Henry and James Stevenson saw a godwit at the same location on 25 April and agreed with our identification. It was not seen on subsequent visits. This sighting coincided with passage of a storm front with strong westerly winds that brought numbers of Mississippi Valley migrants (e.g., Dickcissel *Spiza americana*, Painted Bunting *Passerina ciris*) to the northern Gulf Coast of Florida.

This sighting constitutes the first record of the Bar-tailed Godwit for the Gulf Coast and only the second record for the southeastern United States south of North Carolina (1971, *Amer. Birds* 25: 44-49; 1972, *Amer. Birds* 26: 45-50; 1975, *Amer. Birds* 29: 40-43).—Gary R. Graves, Department of Biological Science, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida 32306 (present address of GRG: Division of Birds, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560); Robin M. Carter, 8484 16 St. #505, Silver Springs, Maryland 20910; and Cathleen C. NeSmith, Department of Biological Science, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida 32306.

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First peninsular sighting of *Vireo olivaceus flavoviridis* in Florida.—On Hypoluxo Island, Palm Beach County, Florida, I observed a *Vireo olivaceus flavoviridis*, a bird formerly known as the Yellow-green Vireo, but recently determined to be conspecific with the Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*) (AOU 1983). One individual was found in the front yard of a private residence in a sparsely foliated gumbo tree (*Bursera simaruba*) in company with a Black-whiskered Vireo (*Vireo altiloquus*). I first observed it on 25 May 1984 at a distance of 15 m from 0810 to 0813. On 26 May 1984 under similar conditions and in the same tree, Robert Flores, Wally George, Brian and Joan Hope, Gloria Hunter, Paul Sykes and I confirmed my identification.

This bird had a vireo bill with some flesh color in the lower mandible, a gray cap, a faint superciliary line with no black over or under it, a very white throat, light gray breast, bright yellow undertail coverts and flanks and sides that extend above the bend of the wing, and yellow-green upperparts.

I am aware of the pitfalls in identifying this subspecies in that every fall I see a few migrating immature Red-eyed Vireos with yellowish undertail coverts and some birds even with yellowish on the lower flanks. However, the distinctive plumage of this individual convinced the observers that it was a *V. o. flavoviridis*.

The sighting of this race is the first published for peninsular Florida and the fourth for the state. The first three Florida records occurred at Pensacola. On 4 May 1958 at Pensacola, Santa Rosa County, Burt Monroe, Jr., Francis M. Weston and Lyman Goodnight collected a male for the first state record. This specimen was deposited in the Louisiana State University Museum of Zoology collection (LSU 22492) (Monroe 1959). On 11 May 1958 at Pensacola the same party saw a second bird (Monroe 1959). Francis M. Weston sighted