Again, three nestlings were present and the nest was about 25 m from shore and 450 m from the first nest (Fig. 2). This nest was also constructed in a stand of saltwort surrounded by sea oxeye daisy measuring 65 cm high. This nest was 45 cm above the ground with a nest cup 5 cm wide and 7 cm high.

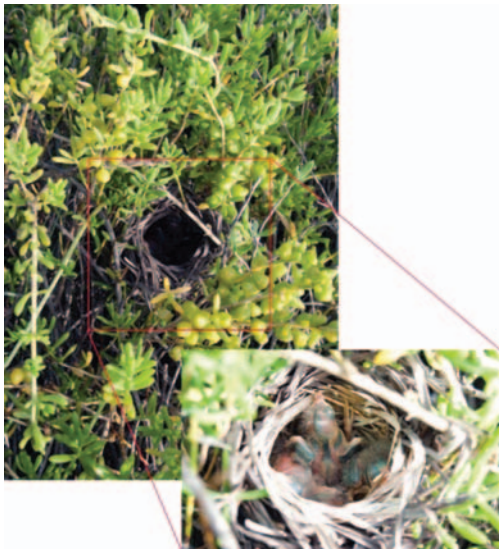

Figure 2. Second Seaside Sparrow nest in saltwort and sea oxeye daisy with three nestlings.

In addition to the two active Seaside Sparrow nests, we observed numerous juvenile Seaside Sparrows along the Cayo Atascoso during July and October, 2012. Juveniles were distinguishable from the adults by their faint plumage, often larger eyes, and grouped behavior. Adults were rarely seen in groups of more than 3 unless during an altercation whereas juveniles were observed in groups averaging five members, but as large as 10. This site was visited each season during 2012 and Seaside Sparrows were observed during each visit. We would like to thank the staff of LANWR for their assistance.

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A CASE OF HERMAPHRODITISM IN A WOOD DUCK (*AIX SPONSA*)

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The Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*) is a North American duck that exhibits the characteristics of typical dichromatic species, with male breeding plumage brighter in color compared to the drab brownish female counterpart (Hepp and Bellrose 1995).

Several studies have focused on the costs and benefits of brightly colored plumage in male birds, such as conspicuousness to predators and potential mates (Dale and Slagsvold 1996), the mating advantage in males expressing delayed plumage maturation (Hakkarainen et al. 1993; Karubian et al. 2008), and the advantage of crypsis in females to decrease predation (Brooks et al. 1999; Amundsen 2000). Further investigations have examined the driving force behind female preference for brightly colored males (Lozano 1994). However, a keen interest has focused on the expression of male plumage coloration in females. Modified female coloration patterns have been naturally and artificially examined in several species of poultry (Cole and Lippincott 1919; Parkes and Brambell 1926; Fitzgerald and Cardona 1993). Herein we

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describe an apparent case of hermaphrodism in a Wood Duck (Fig. 1).

The Wood Duck specimen was collected along the Trinity River, east of Cleveland and north of Liberty (Liberty County, TX) on 21 January 2012 by Jason Overall, along with two male Wood Ducks from a flock of five individuals flying by. The ducks were feeding on acorns submerged in 10-15 cm of rain water from rain showers on 20 January 2012. The unusual specimen was prepared as a taxidermy mount by Lowell Shapley after it was collected, and had characteristics of both female (distinctive white eye ring, face lacking iridescent green or extensive striping pattern) and male (typical breast pattern, iridescent patches on top of head and parts of wing and tail coverts) (Fig. 1). These unusual features prompted Shapley to save the carcass for gross examination and donate the mounted specimen to HMNS (HMNS VO 3447).

JEM dissected the reproductive tract on 8 February 2012 and found the presence of both an ovary and testes, with the ovary and left testes forming an ovotestis (11 x 5 mm, contained no oocytes ≥ 1 mm in diameter) and the right testes normal in appearance (5 x 3 mm), confirming the individual was a true hermaphrodite. Further histological analysis would be necessary to determine if the ovarian and/or testicular tissue was fully functional.

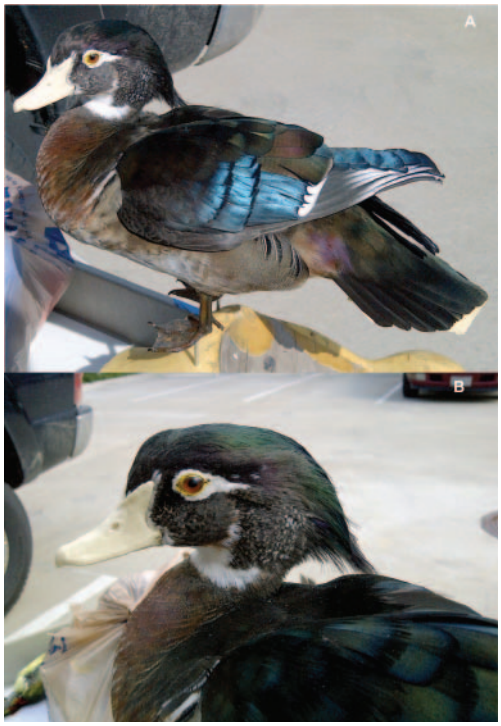

Figure 1. Wood duck (*Aix sponsa*) taxidermy mount which presents an intermediate plumage appearance between genders. (A) Full body mount. (B) Left side of mounted head.

Research has shown that shifts in plumage coloration is hormone-dependant (Lank et al. 1999; Kimball 2006). Specifically, male coloration patterns can develop due to estrogen breakdown in aging females (Kimball and Ligon 1999; Doucet et al. 2007) or degeneration of ovaries caused by a pathologic condition (Parkes and Brambell 1926) or abnormalities during fertilization (Fitzgerald and Cardona 1993). The specimen appeared to be a healthy individual, in behavior and morphology. The reproductive tract showed no signs of disease, suggesting this observed change in secondary sexual characteristics is due to an embryonic abnormality, not a degeneration of ovarian tissue, or estrogen breakdown due to age.

In addition to morphological shifts, such females may also exhibit male behavior, including courting, mating, and occasionally successful fertilization of other females (Cole and Lippincott 1919). Future studies examining long-term behavior of such individuals as we have described would provide a unique perspective on the behavioral implications of such an anomaly.

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GOLDEN-FRONTED WOODPECKER EATING CARRION

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The Golden-fronted Woodpecker *Melanerpes aurifrons* occurs from southwestern Oklahoma through Texas and Mexico as far south as northern Nicaragua. Golden-fronted Woodpeckers are omnivorous, foraging at all levels in trees and on the ground where they search for insects. Acorns, pecans, wild fruits, citrus, whole corn and cornmeal, and even dog food are eaten (Bent 1939, Casto 1973). At 18:30 hr on April 26, 2013 at the Santa Clara Ranch located in Starr County, Texas. 26° 33" 02.59' N, 98° 32" 29.34' W a dead mouse (*Peromyscus* sp.) was discovered in a hunting blind placed in Tamaulipan thorn brush. The mouse appeared freshly killed of an unknown cause. After discovered the mouse was placed in front of the blind in hopes of luring a Greater Roadrunner (*Geococcyx californianus*). Within a short period of time a Golden-fronted Woodpecker landed and walked up to the mouse. The woodpecker prodded the mouse a few times then picked it up and flew off with it. While woodpeckers have been documented to feed on a variety of items in addition to this account of the Golden-fronted Woodpecker only the Red-headed Woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*) has been documented to eat small mammals (Smith et al. 2000; Beal 1911).

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