

SORAS (*PORZANA CAROLINA*) VISIT BIRDFEEDER

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On 2 April 1988, during intermittent torrential rains, I observed a Sora (*Porzana carolina*) feeding at my bird feeding station. The station is approximately 15 m (49 ft) from a small salt marsh and is situated at the edge of a palmetto (*Serenoa repens*)/pine (*Pinus elliotti*) thicket. Millet and sunflower seeds had been broadcast directly on the ground and the feeding aggregation at the time was composed of one Sora, two Blue Jays (*Cyanocitta cristata*), one Rufous-sided Towhee (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*), and three Mourning Doves (*Zenaida macroura*). The Sora was quite aggressive, chasing one dove into and then out of the bird bath. The Sora appeared to be feeding exclusively on the millet. According to Bent (1925) the Sora feeds principally on molluscs and aquatic insects during the nesting season. At other times of the year, approximately 73% of the diet may be seeds (Terres, 1980).

The Sora continued to appear several times each day. His eating behavior seemed bizarre in that he always brought a leaf or pine straw from under a nearby palmetto, placed this vegetation on the millet, then ate a few seeds. He repeated this gesture several times during each visit. He became less aggressive but was still the dominant bird at the feeder. I placed an ear of shucked corn in the feeding area and the Sora immediately claimed the corn by standing on it, his long toes wrapped completely around the ear. He then vigorously pecked and pulled at the kernels until the cob was cleaned. On 11 April, a second Sora appeared and the two attended the feeder in harmony with each other and with the other birds. They were last observed on 14 April 1988.

Literature Cited

Bent, A. C. 1925. *Life Histories of North American Marsh Birds*. Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C.

Terres, J. K. 1980. *Encyclopedia of North American Birds*. Alfred A. Knopf, N. Y.

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