

broomstraw (*Andropogon* sp.) and wire grass (*Aristida* sp.) are characteristic along with forbaceous species that mostly belong to the Aster, Figwort, and Legume families. In the area adjacent the dirt runways, the vegetation is shorter in stature with patches of bare earth, a feature of more recent disturbance. The vegetation is of low-growing annual plants that include crabgrass (*Digitaria* sp.), horseweed (*Erigeron* sp.), and lespedeza (*Lespedeza* sp.).

The landfill site is on the Fort Bragg Military Reservation in Cumberland County. Situated on a hillside, it covers perhaps 100 acres. Only some 10 acres of recently reclaimed land is presently being inhabited by the larks. The plant cover is in the early stages of secondary succession as described by Oosting (1942). It features mostly low-growing annual plants along with legume plantings of flat pea (*Lathyrus* sp.), lespedeza, partridge pea (*Cassia* sp.), and sweet clover (*Melilotus* sp.). These were planted by personnel of the Fort Bragg Wildlife Branch.

LITERATURE CITED

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A Brown Thrasher with an Aberrant Culmen

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On or about 15 January 1979 a female Brown Thrasher (*Toxostoma rufum*) with an extremely long beak was found dead in a suburban yard in Sumter, Sumter County, S.C. The collector is unknown. The specimen was salvaged by the S.C. Wildlife and Marine Resources Department. The carcass was prepared as a study skin (CM No. 1984.51).

The length (chord) of this individual's maxilla from the base of the skull is 105 mm. The mandible, which appears to have been broken, is 66 mm. In addition to their unusual length (Fig. 1), each element is twisted to the left, the maxilla more so than the mandible, so that viewed dorsally, the beak is crossed.

The average maxilla (exposed culmen) length of 10 normal Brown Thrashers in the Charleston Museum is 25.3 mm., 24% that of the aberrant specimen.

The individual weighed 44 g when received at the museum, and although it was dehydrated, this is still considerably less than the 67.6 g average of four Brown Thrashers banded on Sullivan's Island in October 1983. The low weight of the thrasher suggests that it starved. It is astounding that it survived for the length of time it took the beak to attain such an abnormal length.



Fig. 1. Brown Thrasher with deformed bill.

I appreciate the help of Tom Murphy, SCWMR, who salvaged the specimen, and Julian Harrison, who contributed the specimen to the state collection. The skin was prepared by Beverly Ammons. Jo Fetzer made the photograph, and Nancy Pringle prepared the manuscript.