

care of the egg. Every time I entered my blind the chicks more than a few days old scattered and hid under the nearest cover. It sometimes took them several hours to return to their scrapes where I could watch them again, and some never returned.

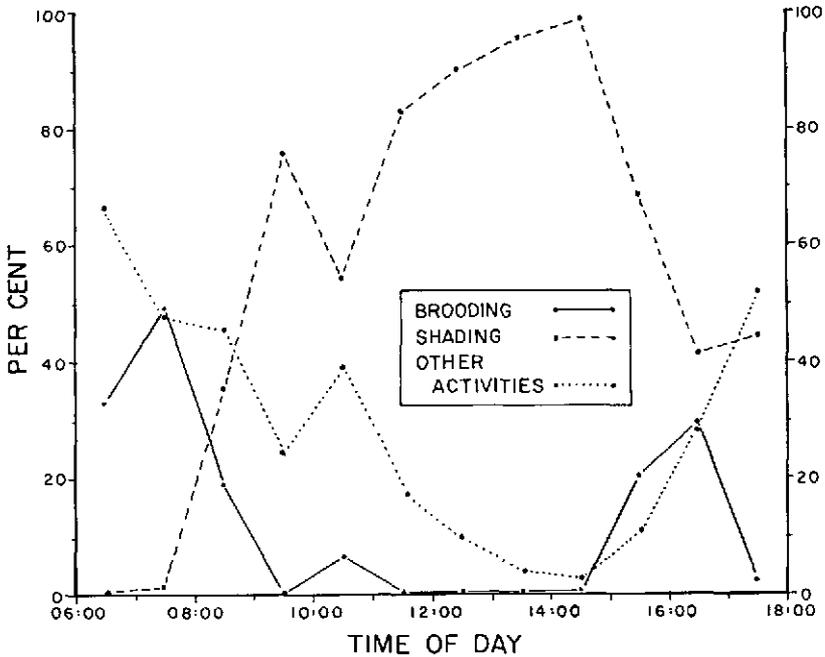


FIGURE 7. Activities by adult Sooty Terns during the first two weeks of caring for the chick, showing the percent of time they spend brooding or shading the chick.

The records I do have, summarized for the first 2 weeks of the chick's life, indicate that the adults are most attentive during the midday hours, much as they were when caring for the egg (Figure 7). As in incubation, adults rise up off the chick to shade it in hotter hours of the day and brood it when it is cool. Females spent somewhat more time with the chick than males did (157 to 132 bird-hours), but statistically these are not significantly different ($X^2=2.16$, $P>0.10$). I found little difference between males and females in care of chicks, and I have combined the records in Figure 7.

Generally adults are less attentive when caring for the chick than when caring for the egg. They often stand to the side of the chick for an hour or more, and their attentiveness decreases as the chick grows older. After the chick is about 3 weeks old, the adult spends very little time actually caring for it other than feeding it, although they may stand