

GENERAL NOTES

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A specimen of the Blue-faced Booby in northwest Florida.—On 8 September 1979, as Brooks and Lyn Atherton and I walked along the beach near Bald Point, Franklin County, Florida, Brooks noticed a weathered bird skull on the sand well above the high-tide mark. We agreed that it appeared to be the skull of a Gannet (*Morus bassanus*), but a later comparison with solid study skins in the Tall Timbers Research Station's collection indicated that it was too small for that species.

I sent the specimen to Storrs L. Olson, National Museum of Natural History; he wrote (17 Sept. 1979) that it was the skull of a Blue-faced Booby (*Sula dactylatra*) and described the differences between the skull of that species and those of *M. bassanus*, *S. sula*, *S. leucogaster*, and *S. nebouxii*.

Although frequently seen at the Dry Tortugas and collected there by Paul Bartsch (Howell 1932), the Blue-faced Booby is seldom encountered in other parts of Florida. Along the coast of northwest Florida I note the following published sight records: two at Destin, 14 July 1950 (Lowery and Newman 1951); single birds off Pensacola "considered to be of this species" on 14 May 1933 and 27 July 1952 (Weston 1965); six seen about 9 miles off St. Marks Light, 23 April 1966 (Cunningham 1966; the *corrigendum* I published for this record [Stevenson 1967: 561] was based on a misunderstanding); one at Santa Rosa Island, 31 March 1976 (Hamilton 1976). However, the only prior specimen from northwest Florida was one picked up alive by Mary Ann Olson at Panama City Beach on 8 June 1978. Shortly after its demise, Storrs L. Olson prepared the bird as a study skin for the National Museum of Natural History (Jackson and Cooley 1978). The skull from Bald Point is number 3657 in the Tall Timbers collection.

LITERATURE CITED

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Little Blue Heron breeding bare-part coloration and plumage characteristics.—Great change in bare-part coloration during the breeding season is characteristic of ardeids (Palmer 1962, Handbook of North American birds, vol. 1, New Haven, Yale Univ. Press; Cramp and Simmons 1977, Handbook of the birds of Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, vol. 1, Cambridge, Oxford Univ. Press). Information I gathered in Tampa Bay, Hillsborough County, Florida, on known age Little Blue Herons (*Florida caerulea*) marked with individually numbered leg streamers differs from Palmer's (1962) description of Little Blue Herons.