

GENERAL NOTES

An albino common loon.—On the afternoon of January 4, 1944, along the outer beach between Lighthouse Park and the northern tip of Anastasia Island which lies across Matanzas Bay from the city of St. Augustine, Florida, my wife and I sighted what we took to be a large white gull, lying belly-up just above high water mark. Upon close inspection, it proved to be a dead albino common loon, *Gavia immer*.

The bird was a true albino, with light red irides and pure white plumage. The soft parts were unpigmented, but due to decomposition the tarsi had a greenish cast. The bill was whitish in color.

An examination of the carcass showed no sign of injury. However, it was extremely emaciated, and lacked entirely the fat so typical of healthy specimens. The stomach contained only a small amount of thick, brownish mucous. The bird was a female and the ovaries were small. Measurements were as follows: culmen, 71 mm.; wing, 305; tarsus, 75. The feathers of the back and scapulars were well-rounded and, according to Bent (U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull. 107: 52, 1919), this indicated that the bird was in the first winter plumage. It is now number 159148 in the ornithological collections of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia.

There is a second true albino common loon at the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology in Toronto, Canada. Mr. Terence M. Shortt of that institution has very kindly supplied the following data on the bird: "Catalog number—R. O. M. Z. 30, 11, 21, 2. Shot at Go Home Bay, Georgian Bay, Ontario, in November 1930. Collector—Dr. W. P. Firth. Remarks: Earlier in the season an albino young loon was observed with normal birds at Go Home—possibly the same bird."

I can find no previous published records of albinism in *Gavia immer*.

Albinism probably occurs as frequently in loons and grebes as it does in other forms of birdlife, but it may be that the mortality rate is much higher among the albino offspring. The eyes of albino animals are notoriously weak, and food-getting may be more difficult.—FREDERICK A. ULMER, JR., *Zoological Society of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*.

Snowy egret in Wisconsin.—After a lapse of over 60 years the reappearance of the snowy egret, *Leucophoyx thula thula*, in Wisconsin has been definitely established. So completely had this species absented itself from its former range in this and adjoining states that in "Birds of Illinois and Wisconsin" (Field Mus. Nat. Hist. Publ. 131 (9): 369, 1909) Cory states, "The Snowy Heron [Egret] is of accidental occurrence in Illinois and Wisconsin"; and Kumlien and Hollister say "A rare and irregular visitor from the south during August and September," and "In August, 1866 Mr. H. L. Skavlem shot six of these birds from a flock of egrets also on Lake Koshkonong [Wisconsin]. This is the last authentic record of any numbers that we know of. Of late years very rare."

This bird's presence on a small pond in Kenosha County near the Wisconsin-Illinois state line could have easily been overlooked, since it was in company with nine immature little blue herons, *Florida caerulea*. Miss Phyllis Gorski and Mr. Carlton Buntrock of Milwaukee were attracted by this group of late summer migrants and they stopped their car and observed them intently for a considerable time. A noticeable variation was seen in the activities of one particular bird, especially when "puddling" with its feet; a subsequent check of the black toes and lower tarsus, when the bird left the water, confirmed their conviction that this individual was different.