

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.

Upon the information given, the writer accompanied Miss Gorski and Mr. Buntrock to the pond on August 29 and found the birds to be frequenting the area as noted on the previous visit. The bird was collected, proved to be a male in fair plumage and is now in the collection of the Milwaukee Public Museum.—JOHN L. DIEDRICH, *Milwaukee Public Museum, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.*

Snowy egrets in Iowa.—A snowy egret, *Leucophoyx thula thula*, was observed at Fisher's Lake north of Des Moines, Polk County, Iowa, on July 30, 1948, where it was feeding with 11 American egrets. On the following day two snowy egrets were found in the company with the American egrets. The birds were studied with a 20-power telescope and their identity definitely established. On August 4, three snowys were found in company with 25 American egrets. On August 5, three snowy egrets at Fisher's Lake and an individual on a small pond about a mile south were observed.

In checking over the records for Iowa I found that none were substantiated by specimens. A specimen of the snowy egret was, therefore, collected and found to be a male measuring 23 inches and weighing 17 ounces. This specimen has been placed in the collection of the State Historical Museum in Des Moines.—JACK W. MÜSGROVE, *State Historical Museum, Des Moines, Iowa.*

Young snowy egrets with saffron in plumage.—While examining an ibis and heron rookery in Camden County, Georgia, on May 30, 1947, I was surprised to find broods of snowy egrets, *Leucophoyx thula*, with saffron in their plumage. Herbert L. Stoddard came with me the following day, and said he had never observed snowy egrets at any age with any color in their plumage. If one of a brood had saffron in its plumage, all had, with possibly one exception. I picked up one young not yet able to fly but able to scramble out of its nest and made the following notes on color: "Skin color yellowish-green shading into greenish-yellow on neck; feet light greenish-yellow; legs olive-green; bill black, with yellow at base extending to some extent into body of bill; eyes gray, iris blue; head feathers white with saffron cast; all other feathers white but with saffron tips on wing feathers particularly and, to a lesser extent, on feathers of back, tail and neck."—FREDERICK V. HEBARD, *1500 Walnut St. Bldg., Philadelphia 2, Pennsylvania.*

A bittern "pumps" from a perch in a tree.—On May 2, 1948, Mr. Paul Baker and I heard a bittern, *Botaurus lentiginosus*, "pumping" in a near by marsh. As we approached, the bird flew up out of the marsh and alighted on the limb of a red maple tree, about 30 feet above the ground. As we watched it through our glasses it "pumped" several times. The sound was clear and distinct, and the motions of the head and neck were more readily observed than is usual when a bird is half hidden by marshy vegetation.

Looking through the literature available to me, I find only one other authentic record of a bittern perching in a tree (Wright, Auk, 34: 476-477), and none of its "pumping" in such a position.—ARETAS A. SAUNDERS, *Fairfield, Connecticut.*

The eastern glossy ibis in Delaware.—On June 1, 1947, while on a trip to the marshes in the Fowler's Beach section of Delaware, a small flock of five eastern glossy ibises, *Plegadis f. falcinellus*, was flushed out of the cattails, along with a considerable number of little blue herons, black-crowned night herons, snowy egrets, and American egrets. As this was my first sight of the ibis, its identity was unknown at the time, although the fact that they were birds strange to me was quite apparent from the flight and behavior. The ibises separated from the herons and settled back