

## GENERAL NOTES

**Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*) Nesting in Cuba.**—On April 24, 1957, Eric L. Mills, Barry M. Millman, and I were directed to a small bay on the property of the Cuban naturalist, Sr. Maderera Babun, by Sr. Babun and Sr. Mario Santamaria. The bay is approximately one mile west of the port of Santiago de Cuba in the province of Oriente. As we approached it we saw several Cattle Egrets in breeding plumage flying from it to a nearby pasture and bringing back sticks. They were landing in the trees of a small island. We estimated that 50 or more pairs were present, and watched for twenty minutes while many of the birds continued to make forays for sticks. Several were seen displaying.

Also present in the trees, but apparently not nesting at this time, was a smaller number of Little Blue Herons *Florida caerulea*, and Snowy Egrets *Leucophoyx thula*. Unfortunately, we had not the facilities to reach the island, nor the time to return.

Mr. James Bond (*in litt.*) informs me that this is the first recorded nesting colony of the Cattle Egret in Cuba, and the third in the West Indies.—W JOHN SMITH, 40 Roslyn Ave., Ottawa 1, Ontario, Canada.

**Ross' Geese Nesting at Southampton Island, N.W.T., Canada.**—Two Ross' Goose (*Chen rossi*) nests and several of the birds were sighted among the Blue and Snow Geese (*Chen caerulescens*) in the colony at the Boas River Delta, Southampton Island, during the summer of 1956. (We use *caerulescens*, because we regard these latter forms to be color phases.) This area is approximately 540 miles east southeast of the Perry River area where Ross' Geese are known to nest.

The possibility of finding Ross' Goose nesting in the area was first suggested by Graham Cooch of the Canadian Wildlife Service. The senior author accompanied Mr. Cooch during the 1953 nesting season study of Blue and Snow Geese. In the course of that study two flightless female Ross' Geese were caught and banded in banding drives of flightless Blue and Snow Geese on July 31 and Aug. 1. Both of these Ross' Geese had signs of what might have been brood patches. Both banding drives covered an area 5-7 miles inland from the high tide line. This was much further inland than the area covered in the daily study routes through the goose nests; hence the Ross' Goose nests, if present somewhat inland, were missed.

Eskimo Toma who participated in the banding drives that year said he had shot a Ross' Goose the previous year (1952) at Prairie Point on the east side of South Bay approximately 92 miles east of the Boas River Delta.

In 1956 the authors were in the Boas River studying Brant (*Branta bernicla*), this time alert to the possibility of sighting Ross' Goose nests. On June 25 a single Ross' Goose flew inland to the North, low over our camp on one of the River delta islands, 2½ miles from shore. This bird was noticeably smaller than the Snow Geese nesting all about us, and its stubby bill and warty upper mandible were obvious. The grinning patch characteristic of Snow Geese, and the orange iron stain present to some degree in the Southampton Snows were absent in this goose. Most distinctive feature of the Ross' was its high-pitched squeaky call. We watched the bird until it circled and landed among the islands and waterways toward the north horizon.

Another Ross' Goose was seen on July 10 while we were hiking North along the water courses toward the inland edge of the Blue-Snow Goose colony. This bird circled among the river islands about 7 miles inland. About 3 miles further inland, Eisenhart discovered a Ross' Goose nest on a large, low island about 100 yards from water. The nest was built up of willow and moss, and was lined with white down similar to that of a Snow Goose. There were two eggs in the nest. One egg was

about the size of a Brant egg, the other slightly larger. As we approached, the female was on the nest, the male standing about 5 feet away. A pair of Snow Geese were nesting about 30 yards off. As we drew near, the Snow Geese left their nest and walked away from us toward the Ross' Geese. The Ross' Geese joined the Snows in their retreat, showing no signs of territorial aggressiveness common among Snow and Blue Geese. We had an excellent chance to compare the two species.

On July 16, a second Ross' Goose nest was found about four miles inland on a river island. It was 200 yards from water, was built of moss and willow, and contained three eggs measuring 74 x 49 mm, 76 x 53 mm, and 75 x 50 mm. All eggs were pipped. Only the female was seen at the nest. On July 17, this second nest was revisited. All eggs were hatched. The young were polymorphic—one gray, one yellow, one pearl gray. Color photographs were made of the female at the nest. On July 18 the young had left the nest.

In a round-up Aug. 4 of flightless geese for banding, two flightless Ross' Geese were captured and banded.—THOMAS W. BARRY, *Canadian Wildlife Service, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada* AND JAY N. EISENHART, *Department of Conservation, Cornell University*.

**Three Additions to the Avifaunal Records of Newfoundland.**—Throughout the first week of June, 1955, five adult Greater Scaup, *Aythya marila nearctica*, two males and three females, were observed by Hewitt on a fresh-water pond near Portugal Cove South. Since only the Lesser Scaup had previously been reported from Newfoundland, one adult male was collected by James Lowther on June 6. The specimen was presented to Mr. L. M. Tuck, Dominion Wildlife Officer.

On June 13, 1953, a mated pair of Common Scoters, *Oidemia nigra americana*, was seen on a fresh-water pond on the Avalon Peninsula, about eight miles inland from Cape Broyle. The male, in breeding condition, was collected by Hewitt and presented to L. M. Tuck. On July 16, 1955 two female Common Scoters with their downy-young broods consisting of seven and two, were observed on separate small lakes in the interior of the Avalon Peninsula. No males or other species of waterfowl were seen on these ponds. One female and four of her brood were collected by the authors on a four-acre pond at a point 8.5 miles W. of Cape Broyle. The skins have been deposited with the National Museum of Canada (female and two young), Cornell University (one young) and the remaining young with L. M. Tuck. As far as can be determined, this is the first substantiated breeding record of the Common Scoter in Newfoundland. Probable breeding had, however, been reported, by Bent (U. S. Natl. Mus. Bull. 130:121, 1925), and by Peters and Burleigh (Birds of Newfoundland, p. 123. Dept. Nat. Resources, St. John's Newfoundland, 1951).

On June 9, 1956, at Cape Broyle, a male Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*) was collected by Peters. This bird had established a territory in a one-acre grass clearing at the west end of the town and was singing from trees around its edge. This specimen, now in Mr. Tuck's possession, establishes the first record of a Bobolink for Newfoundland.—STUART S. PETERS AND OLIVER H. HEWITT, *Department of Conservation, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York*.

**Xantus' Murrelet (*Endomychura hypoleuca scrippsi*) from the State of Washington.**—In the course of rearranging the races of the Marbled Murrelet (*Brachyramphus marmoratum*) in the U. S. National Museum Collection it was noted that one of the winter plumage specimens, previously identified as that species, did not quite resemble the majority. Further investigation showed that it was not a Marbled Murrelet but rather a Xantus' Murrelet. This was substantiated by Dr.