

**Hérons catch two fish in one strike.**—While studying the feeding ecology and behavior of herons during 150 trips over 4 years to Brigantine National Wildlife Refuge, New Jersey, I occasionally saw individuals catch two fish with one strike. I saw Great Egrets (*Casmerodius albus*) catch two fish in one strike 26 times, Great Blue Herons (*Ardea herodias*) 19 times, and Snowy Egrets (*Egretta thula*) and Louisiana Herons (*Hydranassa tricolor*) 3 times each. The herons always caught the two fish between the mandibles rather than by impaling, and the two fish were always of approximately equal size.

The double catches were rare compared to one-item strikes, making up less than 1% of each species' successful strikes. Occasional individuals had remarkable success at catching two fish, such as one Great Blue Heron that made six double catches of 1-inch fish out of 16 successful strikes, including four 2-prey strikes in succession.

The rarity of occurrence and the lack of any observable differences from normal feeding suggest that double catches are basically accidental. Many cases were of birds in large assemblages of herons and other fish-eaters, apparently concentrating on schooling fish or fish in a spawning run, or of solitary individuals feeding where many small fish broke the surface. The birds came up with two fish presumably because there was a second in line with the one at which they aimed.—DAVID E. WILLARD, *Department of Biology, Princeton University, New Jersey 08540*. Accepted 3 Mar. 75.

**Possible intermediate Ross' Goose and Snow Goose in Manitoba.**—D. Trauger, A. Dzubin, and J. Ryder described characteristics of apparent hybrids of Ross' Goose (*Chen rossii*) and Snow Goose (*Chen caerulescens caerulescens*) (1971, *Auk* 88: 856). While reviewing the status of Ross' Goose in Manitoba, Hatch was given a photograph from Shortt's files of a "Ross' Goose" shot from a flock of Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*) at Oakville, Manitoba on 5 October 1935 by W. E. B. King of Winnipeg (Fig. 1). As the bird showed many of the characteristics of the "intermediate white geese" described by Trauger et al. (op. cit.), copies of the photograph were sent to Trauger, Dzubin, and Ryder for confirmation. All agreed the photograph was of a possible intermediate of the Ross' Goose and Snow Goose. The massive bill and large tarsus are similar to a Snow Goose, but many of the other characteristics are more Ross-like than most intermediates that the trio studied. Trauger speculated that the bird may be a backcross or a member of the F<sub>2</sub> generation. The Ross-like characteristics of the bird are black-gray cap, dark eyeline, and lack of gray on the neck, scapular region, and back. The short, stubby appearance of the mandibles and reduced grinning patch are intermediate characteristics.

Increased abundance and a recent expansion of the breeding distribution of the Ross' Goose are important factors in bringing these two species into closer contact. Although a number of factors including mixed clutches, brood adoptions, ecological competition, and behavioral characteristics probably all contribute to hybridization of Snow Geese and Ross' Geese, Trauger et al. (op. cit.) considered recent increased contact outside the traditional range of the two species as the probable major factor contributing to the occurrence of intermediate white geese in population.

A review of Manitoba records of the Ross' Goose south of Hudson Bay shows two confirmed records of Ross' Goose plus this intermediate bird for the Meadows-Mac-

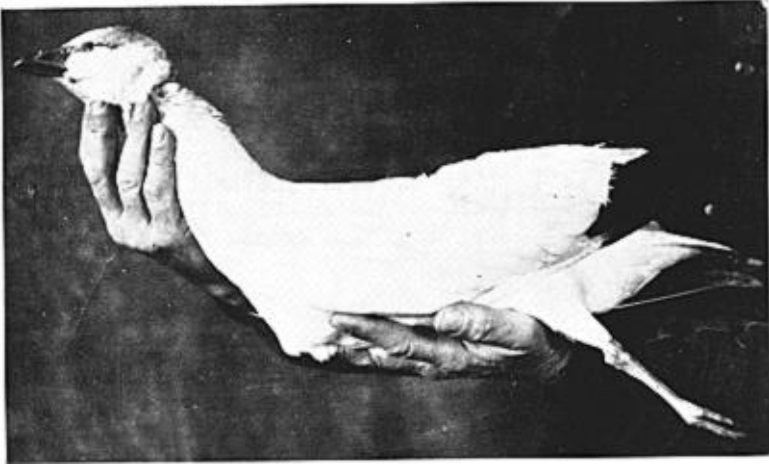


Fig. 1. Intermediate Ross' Goose and Snow Goose (from a photograph by the late B. W. Cartwright).

Donald-Oakville area between 4 May 1934 and 5 October 1935, then no records for more than 20 years. Considering the scarcity of observers at that time relative to now, one would suspect that Ross' Geese were temporarily regular migrants through Manitoba at that time. If such was the case one would expect to find intermediate geese, and this photograph confirms their existence.

Trauger et al. (op. cit.), recognizing the possibility of hybridization of these species prior to the recent observations, stated that "considerable evidence suggests that the hybridization of the Lesser Snow and Ross' Geese is a relatively recent event in view of the recent changes in population and distribution of these species. Nevertheless this does not rule out the possibility that these species crossed in the past but the hybrids were not recognized." Fig. 1 lends support to this statement and is evidence that Snow Geese and Ross' Geese were interbreeding 40 years ago.

We thank D. Trauger, A. Dzubin, and J. Ryder for their critical analysis of the photograph and especially Trauger for his assistance in preparing the manuscript.—DAVID R. M. HATCH, *Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature, 190 Rupert Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0N2, Canada*, and ANGUS H. SHORTT, *101 Morier Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2M 0C5, Canada*. Accepted 10 Mar. 75.