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### Snowy Egret in the Strait of Magellan

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On 24 May 1976 I observed a Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*) foraging along the shore of a small island off Península Córdoba, Isla Riesco, in the Province of Magallanes, Chile (53°0'S, 73°30'W). A. W. Johnson (1965, *The Birds of Chile*, vol. 1, Buenos Aires) describes the Snowy Egret in Chile "as a resident only as far south as Valdivia and as a casual visitor to Llanquihue and Chiloé." This sighting therefore occurred south of the known range of the Snowy Egret by more than 1,000 km.

During the voyage from Puerto Montt to Punta Arenas the vessel, 'El Navarino,' passed through the narrow channel within 40 m of the shore. From that distance I could easily distinguish the black legs and bright yellow toes characteristic of the Snowy Egret.

The current known distribution of the widely dispersed Snowy Egret extends, at least casually, from Alaska (Nelson 1958, *Condor* 60: 142) and Alberta (Weseloh 1972, *Blue Jay* 30:29) to the southern tip of South America.

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### Undependable Breeding Conditions in the Red Phalarope

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Unreliable breeding conditions place a premium on female ability to produce additional and replacement clutches, and therefore may foster female emancipation from care of eggs and young, and polyandry (Emlen and Oring 1977). The Red Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicarius*) presents one of the rare examples of these circumstances among birds.

Red Phalaropes I studied on Bathurst Island in the Canadian high arctic showed wide fluctuations from year to year in breeding population and nesting success as a result of environmental factors. The capricious climate affected the accessibility of nesting sites and food, and arctic foxes (*Alopex lagopus*) brought severe losses to nests in years of fox abundance.

My work was conducted in Polar Bear Pass, 14 km inland from Goodsir Inlet (75°44'N, 98°25'W). Here I gave special attention to a rectangular tract  $\frac{1}{2} \times 2$  km (1 km<sup>2</sup>) comprising some of the best habitat in the region for phalaropes. I stalked the birds daily, watched them from blinds, and attempted to find all nests in the plot. In years when I was not present, field companions from other seasons continued to supply information, particularly Pierre Lamothe for 1972 and John Geale for 1974, 1975, and 1976. Their estimates of breeding activity here were based on birds seen as well as nests found. The Northern Phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*) does not occur here regularly.

Phalarope nests on the area fluctuated during 7 consecutive years, 1970-1971, as follows: 6, 14, 0, 8,