

worn and nearly square. Replacement of lost first-year retrices and the alteration, through wear, of typical first-year retrices to adult-type retrices could both result in erroneous age designation of first-year birds. Qualitative features of primary feathers, there-

fore, should probably be used in preference to tail characteristics in age determination in Black-billed Magpies.

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## BLACK-FOOTED ALBATROSS, BANDED AT MIDWAY ISLAND, RECOVERED OFF BAJA CALIFORNIA IN FIRST YEAR

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A specimen of *Diomedea nigripes*, carrying U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service leg band 767-93705, was caught on baited hook, with four other specimens of the species, on 11 December 1966, from a cluster of 11

that gathered for food about the stern of Scripps Institution of Oceanography RV *Horizon*, at 31° 55.5' N, 120° 14.0' W, off extreme northwestern Baja California near the extension of the international boundary. These birds were collected for the new marine-bird exhibit of the San Diego Zoo and for research, by Bernice M. Wenzel, of the University of California, Los Angeles, on the physiology of olfaction of the Tubinares. The banded individual had not attained the adult plumage.

Philip S. Humphrey, of the U.S. National Museum, provides the information that this albatross had been banded as a chick on Sand Island at Midway Island, in the Hawaiian archipelago, on 2 March 1966 (less than a year previous), by Chandler S. Robbins.

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## DISPERSAL OF CATTLE EGRET AND LITTLE BLUE HERON INTO NORTHWESTERN BAJA CALIFORNIA, MEXICO

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In January 1967 the Cattle Egret, *Bubulcus ibis*, and the Little Blue Heron, *Florida caerulea*, appeared for the first time, so far as I can ascertain, in northwestern Baja California. For the egret there appears to have been no prior record anywhere in the Baja California peninsula. The dispersal of these birds into northwestern Baja California may be attributable to a severe storm of southern origin that swept the outer coast of the peninsula, and adjoining California, with strong winds and heavy precipitation, during the first week of December.

### CATTLE EGRET

The first indication of the penetration of this notorious wanderer into Baja California was provided by two pictures (by Gene Behrman) of a "white tern" on the "Outdoors" page of the San Diego Union for 22 January 1967 (the identification was corrected in the 5 February issue of the newspaper). The caption indicated that this bird adopted the passengers on the sportfishing boat *Holiday*, out of San Diego, "on recent San Martin, Mex., fishing trip." One picture unmistakably showed a Cattle Egret, in drooping pose; the other showed the bird perched on the fishing pole of one of the anglers! Through the kind efforts of Rolla Williams, outdoors editor of the newspaper, I was able to obtain details of the strange occurrence, and corroborating photographs, from Captain Steve Giffin of the *Holiday*. The bird came aboard on 16 January, while the boat was at anchor, where the ocean is about 35 fathoms deep, about six

miles southwest of Punta San Isidro (as shown on H.O. Chart 1149). The location, therefore, was approximately 31° 13.5' N, 116° 30.2' W. The bird seemed "drunk or sick," "looked thin," and appeared fearless, but refused food. It stayed about an hour on deck, and when it lighted on a fishing pole the angler had to snap the rod to dislodge the bird. It stayed on or about the boat for about six hours.

Since the adjacent coast is very arid and very sparsely populated, with few cattle, it seems highly probable that this weakened Cattle Egret had just arrived from a long journey, presumably from the southward, or that it had come some time previously and had found the region inhospitable.

That the Cattle Egret is maintaining its spectacular wandering propensity on the Pacific side of the New World was indicated by the circumstance that an individual of this species flew aboard the Scripps Institution of Oceanography RV *Argo*, on 25 November 1961, between Cocos and Clipperton islands, at 06° N, 97° W, about 920 km west of the Central American mainland (Lint, Auk 79:483, 1962). Migrants have now reached the Galápagos (Lévêque, Bowman, and Billeb, Condor 68:85, 97, 1966).

These circumstances lend weight to the hypothesis that the Cattle Egret colonized the Americas by trans-Atlantic flight. The capture in Trinidad of a Little Egret, *Egretta garsetta*, which had been banded in Spain (Downs, Auk 76:241, 1959), confirms the plausibility of the transoceanic flight of the Cattle Egret. Presumably this species first became established on the western side of the Atlantic in northern South America, for Bond (Second Suppl. to W. Indian Check-list, 1957) has mentioned sight records between 1877 and 1882 and in 1911-12 in British Guiana and Surinam, and Wetmore (Auk 80:547, 1963) has presented evidence of its occurrence in Colombia in 1916 or 1917, whereas the earliest indication of its arrival in North America (in Florida) seems to have been in 1941 or 1942 (Sprunt, Smithsonian Rept. 1954:259-276, 1955). Its subsequent spread in North America has been notably rapid (Peterson, Natl. Geogr. Mag. 106:281-292, 1954;

Sprunt, *l.c.*; Rice, Auk 73:259-266, 1956; AOU Check-list 1957:45; Smith, Auk 75:89, 1958; Davis, Auk 77:421-424, 1960; Palmer, Handbook of North American Birds, 1:443-448, 1962; Nichols, Condor 69:608, 1967; Harris and Yocom, Condor 69:608, 1967; Grosz and Dole, Condor 69:608, 1967). The first record of breeding in Canada has been published by Buerkle and Mancell (Auk 80:378-379, 1963).

Dispersal of the Cattle Egret in Middle America seems to have been largely from the south, though a bird banded in Florida in 1956 was recaptured later in the year on the eastern side of the Yucatán Peninsula (Ligas, Florida Nat. 31:25, 1958)—perhaps on incipient migration. Spread across South America has been documented by Dugand (Lozania 8:1-7, 1954), Stott (Condor 59:143, 1957), Lehmann (Condor 61:265-269, 1959), and Frazier (Auk 81:553, 1964). Records for Middle America include those by Eisenmann (Auk 72:426, 1955) for Panamá, Slud (Condor 59:400, 1957) for Costa Rica, Land (Condor 65:51, 1963) and Smithe and Land (Auk 77:218, 1960) for Guatemala, and Wolfe (Auk 78:640-641, 1961) for México. McCaskie (Condor 67:89, 1965) mentioned two sight records from the west coast of México, one of them from southern Sonora, and Ed N. Harrison (personal communication) indicates that the species is becoming rather common near the west coast of México, though he has not yet found evidence of its breeding there. McCaskie (*l.c.*) has presented an authenticated record for Imperial Beach, and a sight record for Imperial Valley, both in California close to the Baja California border. The Baja California record was, therefore, not unexpected.

Another record of the Cattle Egret in Baja California has just come to my attention. On 24 April 1964 Allan J. Sloan, of the San Diego Natural History Museum, found this species in the mangrove lagoon near the south end of Isla San José, off the coast of Baja California, in the southern part of Golfo de California. Associated species, in addition to Little Blue Heron, mentioned below, were Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*), Common Egret (*Casmerodius albus*), Snowy Egret (*Leucophoyx thula*, topotypic of *L. t. brewsteri*), Louisiana Heron (*Hydranassa tricolor*), and White Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*).

#### LITTLE BLUE HERON

This heron has been recorded in Baja California only from the southern part of the territory (Grinnell, Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool. 32:84, 1928; Hill and Wiggins, Condor 50:157, 1948; Palmer, Handbook of North American Birds 1:428-438, 1962). It has been recorded as rarely seen in California (Grinnell and

Miller, Pacific Coast Avifauna No. 27:559, 1944). In the work just cited the species was relegated to the Supplementary List / Introduced Species and Those of Uncertain Occurrence, probably because only sight records were available. Several of these were obtained at Point Mugu, Ventura County, California, by Miller (Condor 36:178, 1934), and these were later questioned by him (Condor 39:17, 1937). However, in processed Random Notes on Coastwise Fauna / Southern California, presented to me by Loye Miller, I find an entry for Mugu for 21 March 1937 of a "little Snowy with very green legs and gray wash over back seen in perfect light; bill light at base but mostly dark. . . . Great Blue, Egret and 3 Snowy (green legs). . . ." Clearly, this notation refers to *Florida caerulea*.

The first California record of the Little Blue Heron based on a collected specimen (from Bodega Bay) is that of Jeter and Paxton (Condor 66:447, 1964). One was seen recently at Goleta Slough, near Santa Barbara (Abbott, Condor 68:103, 1966), and another on mudflats of San Pablo Bay (Arnold, Failing, Guggolz, and Parmeter, Condor 68:103, 1966).

On 7 January 1967 a pure-white juvenile of distinctive size, form, and foot and bill color was observed at very close range stalking over intertidal boulders exposed at low tide on either side of the tip of Punta Saucedal, in front of Estación de Biología Pesquera at El Sauzal, in the state of Baja California, México, on the shore of Bahía Todos Santos, near Ensenada, at 33° 53.6' N, 116° 42.7' W (from insert on H. O. Chart 1149). It was not clear whether one bird or two was observed. On several preceding days Biólogo Manuel Flores Villegas, director of the fisheries station, and members of his staff, had here observed two white herons like the one I observed with them, and they have given no indication of having previously, nor since, seen such a bird here.

Two other records of the Little Blue Heron have just been made available. As reported above, Allan J. Sloan saw this species, along with the Cattle Egret, on Isla San José in the southern part of Golfo de California. He also saw one individual in San Diego River bottom of Mission Valley, near the May Company store, on 19 March 1967.

Recent records for Nevada and Utah, as well as for California, and the observations here recorded, suggest that this heron, like the Cattle Egret, is expanding its range, at least its wintering range, northwestward. In California and Baja California it is joining a rather long list of birds that are known to constitute maritime assemblages.

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#### A BROAD-WINGED HAWK IN CALIFORNIA

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On 11 December 1966 I collected an immature male Broad-winged Hawk (*Buteo platypterus*) near Imperial Beach, San Diego County. The specimen was prepared by Eugene Cardiff and is now no. 36086 in the San Diego Natural History Museum. It shows

no indication of having been kept in captivity. The Broad-winged Hawk breeds west to North Dakota, and normally migrates east of the Rocky Mountains. In recent years a number of species having similar breeding ranges and migration patterns to the Broad-winged Hawk have been found in limited numbers in the San Diego area during the fall. This is the first time the Broad-winged Hawk has been reported in California, but it can be expected to appear again and should be looked for in the future.

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