

An intriguing footnote to the sightings of a Western Reef Heron on Nantucket Island, Massachusetts, in 1983

A SHORT ARTICLE by Walter Wüst, published in the May 1983 issue of the West German journal *Ornithologische Mitteilungen* (35 (5) 132-133), and forwarded to *American Birds* by Bertel Bruun, may shed light on the possible provenance of the Western Reef Heron (*Egretta gularis*) that was seen by so many hundreds of birders on Nantucket Island between April and October 1983 (Cardillo *et al.*, *Am. Birds*, 37 (5) 827-829).

Since the summer of 1980, according to Dr. Wüst, Western Reef Herons of the subspecies *schistacea* (Red Sea and northwest coast of the Indian Ocean) have been appearing in Central Europe. The first report was of a bird seen near Bechtolsheim, on the Main River in Franconia, West Germany, from August 8 to September 6, 1980. The species appeared simultaneously at Lake Constance in southern Baden-Württemberg, and in November 1980 on the Ammersee in southern Bavaria. On August 8, 1982, a

bird was found at Hagenauer Creek, along the Inn River, also in southern Bavaria.

Dr. Wüst reports that between 1980 and 1982, an animal dealer in central Franconia imported shipments of 200 and 300 Western Reef Herons from Pakistan. The dealer released eight free-flying birds, and it is presumably these that have appeared at Lake Constance and other sites in southern Germany. The remainder of the herons have been sold to bird fanciers in Germany and Austria.

It appears then, that there have been several displaced and possibly disoriented Western Reef Herons wandering around in Germany during the last few years. Although the shipment of these birds did not bring them very much closer to Massachusetts, one wonders whether the Nantucket bird reached North America entirely on its own and without any intervention from man. Only speculation, of course, but was the Nantucket bird a cousin twice removed?

Going Places

Trips and Tours, 1984
Prepared by Anne Wagner

HERE ONCE AGAIN is our annual listing of birding and natural history tours for March-December, 1984, with an occasional Polar Bear or whale spotting trip thrown in. Please note that we have compiled this listing from information provided by the tour sponsors and are not responsible for cancellations and alterations.

Fees quoted are in American dollars and may be considered approximate because of possible changes in airfares, etc. In most cases airfare has been included except where noted (A.N.I.—Airfare Not Included).

In addition to the tours listed, most sponsors offer more (some many more) trips, omitted here because of space limitations. With few exceptions, we do not list trips of less than 8 days, many of which, however, may be of great interest.

The tour sponsor's key initials appear at the end of each entry; full addresses are listed alphabetically after the December tours section. Interested readers who wish catalogs, brochures, etc. should address the sponsors directly and not *American Birds*. T.B.A.—To Be Announced.

MARCH, 1984

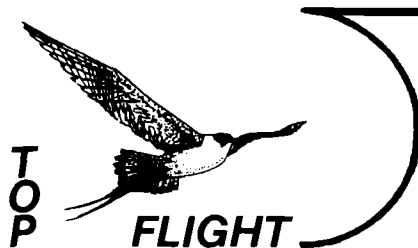
9 — Panama: Tropical Birds, 14 days. Repeated July 13. Continuing study to determine effect of climatic change on tropical forest avifauna. Volunteers will mistnet, band and release. Leader, James Karr From Panama City \$840 (tax-deductible) EW.

11 — Israel, 15 days. Migrating birds, flowers. Leader, Bill Clark. From New York \$2472. WNT.

12 — Mexico, 17 days. Birds, natural history. Leader, Dale Delaney. From Catemaco \$1295. BB.

14 — Baja, Sea of Cortez, 11 days. Alternate departure dates available. Whales, birds, natural history. Leader, T.B.A. From La Paz \$1395. IE.

15 — Himalayas: Nepal, Sikkim, and Bhutan, 23 days. Repeated October 11. Birds, natural and cultural history. Leader, Whitney Nichols. From New York \$4960 March, \$5110 October. QTT.



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1984

WINTER: Mexico (2 tours); Costa Rica (2 tours)
SPRING: Point Pelee; S. James Bay; S.E. Alberta
SUMMER: Churchill; Rainy River; Nfld. & Nova Scotia
FALL: St. Lawrence River; British Columbia Coast; Churchill (Polar Bears)

For further information, write or call collect

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