

THE AMERICAN EGRET AND THE LITTLE BLUE HERON IN OHIO DURING THE SUMMER OF 1930

BY LAWRENCE E. HICKS

Dr. J. M. Wheaton in his "Report on the Birds of Ohio", published in 1879, mentioned the American Egret (*Casmerodius albus egretta*) as a rather common visitor in July, August, and September, believing that the species might even breed in western Ohio. The Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula thula*) was listed as being very rare or accidental and the Little Blue Heron (*Florida caerulea*) was suspected of occurring, though never positively identified up to that time, probably being commonly confused with the Snowy Egret.

Mr. Julius F. Stone, of Columbus, reports having observed numerous "white herons" upon several occasions one summer in the late "eighties" at the Lewiston Reservoir (Indian Lake), in Logan County.

From about 1885 to 1905, the continued depredations of plume hunters in the heronries of southern United States, gradually reduced the numbers of our several species of herons until many were approaching the point of extinction. Of the three species mentioned above, probably the Little Blue Heron suffered the least, as neither the white nor the blue plumage of the species was ever in great demand. This reduction in numbers at the breeding grounds seems to have also greatly reduced the number of records obtained in our northern states during the post-nidification migrations and wanderings of late summer.

William Leon Dawson in his "Birds of Ohio", published in 1903, lists the Snowy Egret as a rare and irregular summer visitor, the American Egret as "formerly not an uncommon summer visitor, now very rare", and the Little Blue Heron as "formerly unknown, recently discovered to be not uncommon in late summer in the lower Scioto Valley and represented casually throughout the state". Henninger reported and collected Little Blue Herons in Pike County in August, 1901, and J. N. Proctor observed a number of the same species in Butler County in July, August, and September of the same year, collecting one specimen. Most of these birds were in the white plumage.

Lynds Jones in his "Revised Catalog of the Birds of Ohio", also published in 1903, lists the American Egret as rare in summer, mentioning records from several scattered northern Ohio counties, the Little Blue Heron as rather rare and irregular, and the Snowy Egret as rare and irregular, mentioning several records from scattered northern Ohio counties, many of which probably actually referred to Little Blue Herons.

A few scattered records of Little Blue Herons and American Egrets were reported from various sections of the state from 1905 to 1920, but both species during that period were regarded as rather rare and very irregular in occurrence.

Robert B. Gordon, in an article in "Short Papers on Ohio Birds", an Ohio State Museum publication of April, 1928, summarizes the

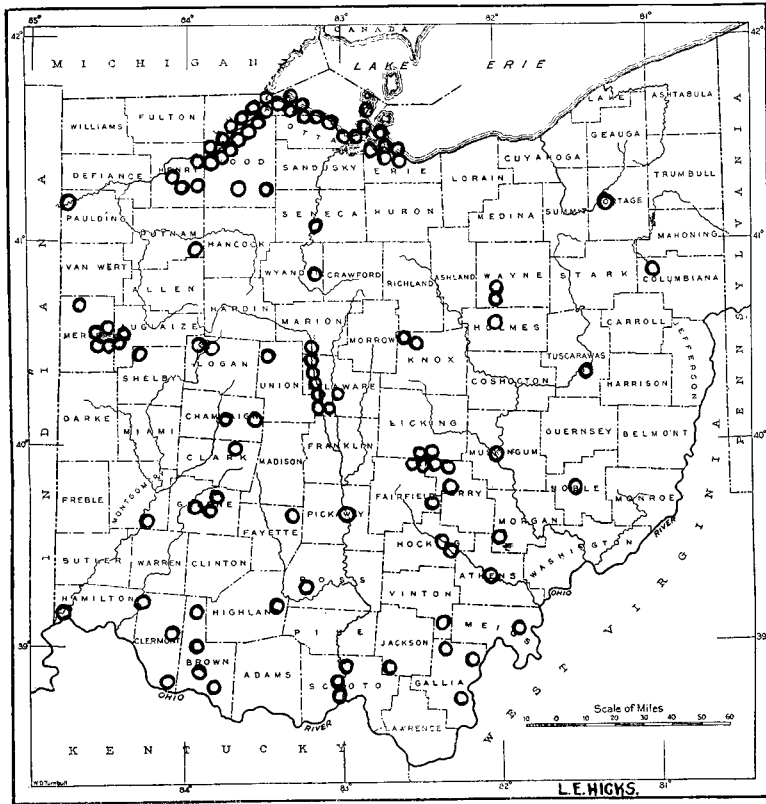


FIG. 52. The 1930 Records of the American Egret in Ohio.

Little Blue Heron and the American Egret records in Ohio for the preceding five years. In 1924, no less than 26 Little Blue Herons (19 reports) and 3 American Egrets (9 reports) were recorded. The year 1925 was dry with drouth conditions prevalent in many areas in eastern United States and 6 Little Blue Herons (6 reports) and 14 American Egrets (19 reports) were tabulated. In 1926 only one Little Blue Heron was reported, but American Egrets were seen in at least four widely separated localities.

No records were obtained in 1927 and only a few scattered reports, including both species, however, in 1928. Of more than 35 Little Blue Herons recorded during these years, all but 6 or 7 were in the white plumage. In 1929 both species were recorded again, including one American Egret observed by the writer in the extreme northeastern part of Ohio at Lake Cardinal in Ashtabula County on July 21, and a number of the same species observed by others at the O'Shaughnessy Reservoir in Delaware County and in the Toledo region.

Lewis W. Campbell in his check list of "The Birds of Toledo, Ohio, and Vicinity" (1930), lists both the American Egret and the Little Blue Heron as rare summer visitors.

During the past 1930 season, a combination of continued unusual conditions was apparently responsible for the influx of American Egrets and Little Blue Herons into the state in numbers far in excess of those that have ever occurred since the dawn of ornithological studies in our state.

The snowy Egret and the Yellow-crowned Night Heron occurred in at least one locality each, bringing the total number of the bittern and heron tribe represented in Ohio during the year 1930 to at least nine species.

During June, July, August, September, and October, the writer was fortunate enough to be able to spend the entire time afield, some field work being done in each one of the eighty-eight counties of the state. During that time, at least one person and in many cases five or more individuals were interviewed in each county concerning the occurrence of "white herons". In addition reports were received from each one of the eighty-one Ohio Division of Conservation game protectors of the state. About 180 questionnaire letters were mailed to field workers of various types who might furnish records and an especial attempt was made to reach every Wilson Club member in the state.

Mr. Milton B. Trautman, of Columbus, was engaged in making some aquatic studies during these months, visiting nearly every county of the state, and especially those localities most likely to be frequented by these birds; to him I wish to express my sincere appreciation for the numerous records furnished. I wish to thank Robert H. McCormick, who assisted me in my own work during the summer; E. L. Moseley, of Bowling Green; Lewis W. Campbell, of Toledo; Jim A. Bruce, of Wooster; and many others, who in addition to furnishing records of their own, aided in the work by compiling records of other observers from their own localities. Without this combined coöperation of several hundred bird enthusiasts from all sections of the state,

the task of attempting to compile even a very incomplete record of heron occurrences would have been impossible.

The two distribution maps following indicate the localities of the state from which what seemed to be authentic records of either the Little Blue Heron or the American Egret were received. Many of the circles represent several groups of "white herons" reported from ad-

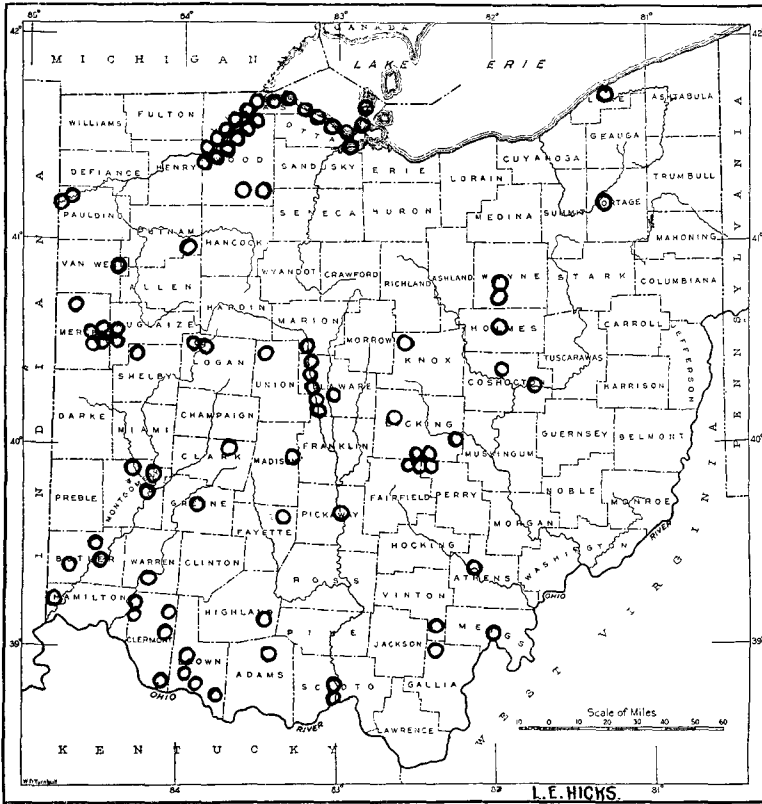


FIG. 53. The 1930 Records of the Little Blue Heron in Ohio.

adjacent localities or groups of herons which were repeatedly observed for a period of from one to three months in a single locality.

The distribution maps are followed by a list of the records for each county, with locality, number of each species observed, date of observation, and the name of the observer or observers. Listing records by counties was found to be not entirely satisfactory, as several concentrations of these birds occurred near county line boundaries. It is also regrettable that it was not found possible to give a complete

list of all of the records received. In four instances, however, a number of records have been listed from a single locality to show the abundance and fluctuations in numbers of the two species as the summer progressed. These are the Buckeye Lake records in Licking, Fairfield, and Perry Counties, the Wayne County records in swampy areas south of Wooster, the Scioto River records in Delaware County, and the Maumee River records in Lucas and Wood Counties.

A survey of the records shows that the American Egrets were recorded in 45 of the 88 counties of the state, with about 110 localities represented. Little Blue Herons were recorded from at least 40 counties and about 95 localities. Not a single bird of this species in the blue adult plumage was reported. At least one of the two species was reported from 54 of our Ohio counties and a number of the localities reporting either Little Blue Herons or American Egrets or both, totals about 115. In all, however, more than 410 reports were received.

In addition to these species, an immature Snowy Egret (*Egretta candidissima*) was collected by Milton B. Trautman at Buckeye Lake on August 27, 1930. Twelve American Egrets and twenty Little Blue Herons were present at the lake on the same day. The specimen is now to be found at the Ohio State Museum in Columbus. Two Yellow-crowned Night Herons were positively identified by Mr. Trautman at Indian Lake in Logan County on September 1, 1930, and the presence of this species was suspected, though not positively established in several other localities of the state. The Snowy Egret also probably occurred elsewhere in the state, but in the immature plumage especially, would have been very difficult to single out from the numerous Little Blue Herons in white plumage.

The first American Egret record of the year was of two individuals observed by the writer at Venice on Lake Erie in Erie County on July 17. A railroad employee who had been working for some time along the edge of the marsh where the herons were feeding, told me that the birds had been present three days. The next records were Reno, Ottawa County, and Bono, Lucas County, on July 20; St. Marys, Mercer County, on July 24; Buckeye Lake, Licking County, and Wooster, Wayne County, on July 25; O'Shaughnessy Reservoir, Delaware County, and Upper Sandusky, Wyandot County, on July 27; and Napoleon, Henry County, Millersburg, Holmes County, and Fredericktown, Knox County, on July 28. This appearance of the species in numbers in so many widely separated localities within ten days of the first known occurrence, is rather significant.

The last American Egret reported for the season was a single bird at Buckeye Lake observed by M. B. Trautman on October 14. Another single bird was observed at the lake on October 6, and two individuals on the same date at O'Shaughnessy Reservoir, Delaware County. Other last dates were Toledo, Lucas County, September 20; New Moorfield, Clark County, September 24; and Wooster, Wayne County, September 1.

The species, then, is known to have been present in the state from July 17 to October 14, a total of ninety days; rather general from July 25 to September 20, reaching its height in numbers between August 8 and September 1.

The first Little Blue Heron record of the year was of two individuals observed by Robert H. McCormick and the writer at O'Shaughnessy Reservoir, Delaware County, on July 19. The next records were at Reno, Ottawa County, Bono, Lucas County, Englewood Dam, Montgomery County, and Ohio Brush Creek, Adams County, on July 20; Xenia, Greene County, on July 21; Tuscarawas River, Coshocton County, on July 23; Antwerp, Paulding County, Indian Creek, Butler County, and Wooster, Wayne County, on July 28. Here again, the species occurred in widely separated localities and in considerable numbers within ten days after its first known occurrence.

The last Little Blue Herons reported for 1930, were two individuals observed by Gus Stucker at New Moorfield, Clark County, on September 24. Other last dates were Buckeye Lake on September 23; Little Cedar Point Marsh, Lucas County, on August 24; and Olen-tangey River, Delaware County, on August 30. Previous extreme dates of the Little Blue Heron recorded in the Wheaton Club records of Columbus were July 24, 1926, and September 18, 1924; and of the American Egret, July 24, 1926, and September 24, 1924.

The Little Blue Heron, then, is known to have been present in the state from July 19, 1930, to September 24, 1930, a total of sixty-eight days; rather general from July 23 to September 10, reaching its height in numbers between July 27 and August 28. The Little Blue Heron made its appearance at practically the same time as the American Egret, but became numerous much more quickly, was common for about a month, and disappeared about three weeks before its larger relative.

The total number of individuals of each species included in the 410 reports received is, American Egret 755 and Little Blue Heron 1185. This would seem to indicate that in the state as a whole, three

County	Location	American Egrets		Little Blue Herons		Date	Observed by
		American Egrets	Little Blue Herons	American Egrets	Little Blue Herons		
1. Adams	Ohio Brush Creek	0	12			7-20-30	O. K. Loudenback, W. Union
2. Athens	4 miles northwest Athens	1	1			9-10-30	J. C. Hambleton, Columbus
3. Auglaize	St. Marys Res.	3	3			8-30-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus
4. Brown	White Oak Creek 2 mi. south Georgetown	1	12			8-14-30	J. R. Srofe, Georgetown
	Eagle Creek	0	2			8-18-30	J. R. Srofe, Georgetown
	Straight Creek	2	3			8-24-30	J. R. Srofe, Georgetown
	White Oak Creek	1	1			8-16-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus
	Fayetteville	1	0			8-17-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus
5. Butler	Four Mile Creek	0	12			7-28-30	J. E. Beaver, Hamilton
	Miami R.—Hamilton	0	10			9-4-30	J. E. Beaver, Hamilton
	Indian Creek	0	28			7-25 to 9-5	J. E. Beaver, Hamilton
6. Champaign	Near Woodstock	4	0			8-17-30	C. W. Cushman, Woodstock
	1 mile east Urbana	1	0			8-15-30	Earl Zirkle, Urbana
8. Clark	Buck Creek, near New Moorfield	1	1			9-1-30	Gus Stucker, Springfield
		1	0			9-2-30	Gus Stucker, Springfield
		2	1			9-3-30	Gus Stucker, Springfield
		1	0			9-6-30	Gus Stucker, Springfield
		2	4			9-24-30	Gus Stucker, Springfield
9. Clermont	Little Miami R. at Milford	1	12			9-3-30	Frank Stagg, Batavia
	Williamsburg	2	11			8-20-30	Frank Stagg, Batavia
	Bullskin Creek—Fr. T.	1	4			8-17-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus
	River at Milford	0	3			8-17-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus
	Jackson Township	0	2			8-17-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus
10. Columbiana	Beaver Lake	1	0			9-7-30	Paul A. Stewart, Wooster
11. Coshocton	Killbuck Creek, north of Coshocton	0	4			7-25 to 8-28	P. Johnson, Coshocton
	Tuscarawas River, east of Coshocton	0	4			7-23 to 8-26	P. Johnson, Coshocton

County	Location	American Egrets	Little Blue Herons	Date	Observed by
12. Delaware	O'Shaughnessy Res.	0	2	7-19-30	L. E. Hicks, Columbus
	Scioto R.—Radnor T.	2	6	8-25-30	O. H. Neimeyer, Prospect
	Rathbone—Scioto R.	4	0	9-17-30	L. E. Hicks, Columbus
	O'Shaughnessy Res.	3	0	9-26-30	R. McCormick, Columbus
	Warrensburg	2	3	8-10-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus
	Rathbone—Scioto R.	3	0	9-15-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus
	Olentangey River at Stratford	0	4	8-2 to 8-30	W. B. Hughes, Delaware
	O'Shaughnessy Res.	3	0	9-26-30	R. McCormick, Columbus
	Rathbone—Scioto R.	2	0	10-6-30	R. McCormick, Columbus
	O'Shaughnessy Res.	1	0	7-27-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus
13. Erie	Venice on Lake Erie	2	0	7-17-30	L. E. Hicks, Columbus
	Sandusky	1	0	8-19-30	H. Crossley, Sandusky
14. Fairfield	6 miles west Sandusky	4	0	9-16-30	Dr. H. Graefe, Sandusky
	Buckeye Lake	8	21	7-31-30	M. B. Trautman, E. Wickliffe
	Rush Creek—Rushville	12	12	7-20-30	C. F. Walker, Columbus
15. Fayette	Madison Township	4	7	8-17-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus
16. Gallia	Lower Raccoon Creek	3	0	8-12-30	J. Harrison, Gallipolis
	Lower Champaign Creek	4	0	8-14-30	J. Harrison, Gallipolis
	Ewington	0	2	8-3-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus
17. Greene	Xenia Fish Hatchery	0	4	7-21-30	E. Harner, Xenia
	Xenia Fish Hatchery	1	17	8-24-30	E. Harner, Xenia
	Trebein—Little Miami River	1	0	9-14-30	E. S.-B. J. Blincoe, Dayton
18. Hamilton	6 miles northeast Xenia	1	0	9-10-30	J. C. Hambleton, Columbus
	Lower Whitewater River	0	7	8-1-30	D. M. Bowersox, Cincinnati
	Mouth Big Miami River	10	0	8-17-30	D. M. Bowersox, Cincinnati
19. Henry	6 miles south Napoleon	1	0	7-28-30	A. Palmer, Jr., B. Green
	Richfield Township	1	0	8-31-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus
20. Highland	Lost Creek—Monroe Township	1	0	8-31-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus
	Rocky Ford Creek	18	12	8-3-30	Clyde L. Srofe, Hillsboro

County	Location	American Egrets	Little Blue Herons	Date	Observed by
21. Hocking	Hocking River, east of Logan No. 2 Bridge—Hocking River	8 8	0 0	8-15-30 8-30-30	C. C. Higgins, Logan C. C. Higgins, Logan
22. Holmes	4 miles north Millersburg	12	52	7-28 to 9-7-30	P. Johnson, Coshocton
23. Jackson	Hamilton Township	1	0	8- 1-30	F. M. Cherrington, Jackson
24. Knox	4 miles north Fredericktown Fredericktown Fredericktown	5 0 12	0 14 0	7-28-30 8-15-30 8-30-30	L. E. Hicks, Columbus G. C. Doup, Mt. Vernon G. C. Doup, Mt. Vernon
25. Licking	Near Johnstown Buckeye Lake Tobasco Tobasco Buckeye Lake Buckeye Lake Buckeye Lake Buckeye Lake Buckeye Lake Buckeye Lake Buckeye Lake	0 1 0 0 8 2 17 15 20 20 11 1	10 0 0 50 21 12 11 8 2 5 2 0	8-14-30 10-6-30 9-10-30 7-28 to 9-5-30 7-30-30 8- 7-30 9- 6-30 9- 9-30 9-10-30 9-17-30 9-23-30 10-14-30	Mrs. N. G. Buxton, Johnstown E. L. Wickliffe, Columbus C. Wolfrom, Columbus Reported to G. Wolfrom, Col'm's M. B. Trautman, Columbus M. B. Trautman, Columbus M. B. Trautman, Columbus M. B. Trautman, Columbus M. B. Trautman, Columbus M. B. Trautman, Columbus M. B. Trautman, Columbus M. B. Trautman, Columbus
26. Lake	Grand River—Perry Township	0	1	8-12-30	E. A. Doolittle, Painesville
27. Logan	Indian Lake	15	5	9- 1-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus
28. Lucas	1 mile east Bono Near Bono Waterville Grand Rapids Grand Rapids Maumee to Otsego R. Maumee to Otsego R. (Additional terr.) McGee Marshes Little Cedar Point	6 1 8 8 5 20 1 25 0	10 15 0 0 0 20 40 25 4	8- 1-30 7-20-30 8- 4-30 8- 5-30 8- 6-30 8- 9-30 8-10-30 8-24-30	L. E. Hicks, Columbus L. Campbell, Toledo Margaret Keler Dr. Barr E. L. Moseley, B. Green L. W. Campbell, Toledo E. L. Moseley, B. Green L. W. Campbell, Toledo L. W. Campbell, Toledo L. W. Campbell, Toledo

County	Location	American Egrets	Little Blue Herons	Date	Observed by
	Maumee River, southwest Toledo	4	0	9-20-30	L. W. Campbell, Toledo
	Maumee River	0	45	8-23-30	L. W. Campbell, Toledo
	Maumee Bay	5	0	8-26-30	C. Meyers, Toledo
	Maumee River	3	0	9- 3-30	C. Meyers, Toledo
29. Montgomery	Taylorville Dam	0	6	7-23-30	L. E. Hicks, Columbus
	3 miles south Miamisburg	7	0	8-10-30	K. L. Keller, Dayton
	City Limits—Dayton	0	1	8-31-30	L. E. Hicks, Columbus
	Englewood Dam	0	6	7-19-30	B. J. Blincoe, Dayton
	Englewood Dam	0	4	7-20-30	E. S. Blincoe, Dayton
	Englewood Dam	0	2	7-21-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus
30. Madison	6 miles north W. Jefferson	0	2	8-11-30	J. H. Umbenhaur, London
31. Marion	Scioto River—Prospect	4	8	8-20-30	O. H. Neimeyer, Prospect
32. Meigs	Shade River—Pomeroy	2	0	8-16-30	H. L. Roush, H. H. Thomas
	Forest River Mine—Pomeroy	0	2	8-10-30	Reported to H. H. Thomas
33. Mercer	St. Marys Res.	1	0	7-24-30	W. J. Heath, Van Wert
	St. Marys Res.	15	10	8-30-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus
	St. Marys River—Rockford	1	1	9- 1-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus
34. Morgan	Sunday Creek, north Glouster	1	0	8- 9-30	B. LaFever, Glouster
35. Muskingum	At Zanesville	4	0	8- 6-30	B. LaFever, Glouster
36. Noble	Near Caldwell	1	0	8-22-30	D. A. Woodford, Caldwell
37. Ottawa	Near Reno—Lake Erie	10	14	8- 1-30	L. E. Hicks, Columbus
	2 miles south Pt. Clinton	1	0	8-18-30	R. W. Sutter
	Catawba Island	0	4	8- 8-30	R. Conant
	Reno	1	15	7-20-30	L. W. Campbell, Toledo
	Northwest Pt. Clinton	20	2	8-15-30	B. Lance, Pt. Clinton
	Put-In-Bay	10	3	9- 3-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus
	Put-In-Bay	2	2	9- 4-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus
	Put-In-Bay	5	3	9- 5-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus

<i>County</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>American Egrets</i>	<i>Little Blue Herons</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Observed by</i>
38. Pickaway	Circleville	3	6	8-17-30	F. Bartley, L. Pontius
39. Paulding	Maumee River—Antwerp Maumee River—Indiana Line	0 5	2 2	7-25-30 8-31-30	L. E. Hicks, Columbus M. B. Trautman, Columbus
40. Perry	Near Somerset Jonathan Creek Buckeye Lake Buckeye Lake Buckeye Lake Buckeye Lake Buckeye Lake Buckeye Lake Buckeye Lake	2 1 8 14 1 5 12 3 12	0 0 21 77 5 10 35 10 20	8- 1-30 8- 4-30 7-31-30 8- 9-30 8-20-30 8-23-30 8-24-30 8-26-30 8-27-30	L. A. Paxton, N. Lexington L. A. Paxton, N. Lexington L. E. Hicks, Columbus M. B. Trautman, Columbus M. B. Trautman, Columbus M. B. Trautman, Columbus M. B. Trautman, Columbus M. B. Trautman, Columbus M. B. Trautman, Columbus
41. Portage	Wingfoot Lake	55	45	8-30-30	C. I. Long, Akron
42. Putnam	Riley Creek, north Bluffton	2	3	8-8 to 8-20	R. W. Sutter
43. Ross	2 miles north Bainbridge	3	0	8-17-30	F. Bartley, L. Pontius
44. Scioto	Scioto River—Portsmouth North of Lucasville	10 2	17 0	8-12-30 8- 6-30	C. Roth, Portsmouth C. Walker, E. S. Thomas
45. Seneca	Sandusky River	20	0	7-30-30	L. W. Paste, Galion
46. Shelby	Lake Loramie	4	12	9- 1-30	E. S.-B. J. Blincoe, Dayton
47. Tuscarawas	Tuscarawas River, near Gnadenhutten	4	0	8-16-30	C. F. Walker, Columbus
48. Union	Bokes Creek—York Township	1	1	9- 1-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus
49. Van Wert	Washington Township	0	1	8-31-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus
50. Vinton	Clarion	1	2	8- 3-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus
51. Warren	4 miles north Morrow	0	2	8-12-30	K. L. Keller, Dayton

County	Location	American Blue Herons		Date	Observed by	
		Egrets	Little Blue Herons			
52. Wayne	6 miles southwest Wooster	11	0	8-17-30	P. Stewart, J. Bruce	
	6 miles southwest Wooster	15	6	7-25-30	J. Bruce, Wooster	
	6 miles southwest Wooster	15	20	8- 2-30	R. Baird, J. Bruce	
	6 miles southwest Wooster	25	10	8-12-30	N. Wylie, J. Bruce	
	6 miles southwest Wooster	15	2	8-14-30	H. Palmer, J. Bruce	
	6 miles southwest Wooster	11	0	8-19-30	A. Kachler, J. Bruce	
	6 miles southwest Wooster	5	0	9- 1-30	G. H. Crawl, Wooster	
	2 miles south Wooster	15	0	8-15-30	W. E. Winkler, Wooster	
53. Wood	Maumee River—Grand River	0	28	8- 4-30	A. D. Meagley, Haskins	
	Maumee River—Waterville	18	23	8-18-30	A. D. Meagley, Haskins	
	Otsego, Maumee River	1	0	8-31-30	C. Graham	
	Grand Rapids	1	0	8-24-30	Mrs. A. Jenkins	
	Otsego, Maumee River	4	0	8-11-30	G. Grames	
	Otsego, Maumee River	1	15	8-13-30	E. L. Moseley, B. Green	
	Montgomery Township	1	2	8-30-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus	
	Jerry City	2	0	8-30-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus	
	Maumee Rapids	4	3	8-30-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus	
	Otsego	0	1	7-28-30	G. Grames	
	Otsego	0	47	8- 9-30	E. L. Moseley, B. Green	
	Otsego	0	50	8-12-30	A. Daniels	
	Waterville	0	15	8-14-30	R. Conant	
	Otsego	0	15	8- 6-30	W. Daniels	
	Grand Rapids	4	0	8-31-30	E. L. Moseley, B. Green	
	Otsego	2	12	8-19-30	G. Grames	
	54. Wyandot	5 miles east U. Sandusky	1	0	7-27-30	M. B. Trautman, Columbus

American Egrets were present for every five Little Blue Herons. Of course, many of these birds were perhaps counted two or more times in the same locality or counted by different observers as they moved from one locality to another. In making estimates of the total number of any species present, we have no way of making allowances for repeated counts.

On the other hand, it seems certain that usually only a part of the individuals present in any locality on a certain day could be enumerated by observers, however well planned an attempt may have been to take a complete count in a given area. Also, in spite of the combined efforts of several hundred observers, the localities listed undoubtedly represent a minority percentage of the total number of localities in which the species did occur, although unusual drouth conditions did surprisingly limit the possible situations where birds might be found, and tend to concentrate our "white heron" population on a relatively small number of isolated tracts. The conspicuousness of the birds in question and the excitement and interest which their appearance always aroused, did materially aid in bringing occurrences to the attention of parties interested in reporting records.

Any attempt to estimate the total number of individuals of each species which spent some portion of the summer of 1930 within the state of Ohio, would be a rather wild speculation in spite of considerable data on the basis of which such an estimate might be made. Any estimate, however, can hardly be proven erroneous, so one might be pardoned for venturing that perhaps 3,000 American Egrets and 5,000 Little Blue Herons did occur at some time during the summer of 1930 in the Buckeye State. The combined number of both species certainly must have exceeded 3,000 individuals and could hardly have been in excess of 15,000.

This estimate is considerably lower than that made for Indiana by Mr. Sidney R. Esten, field worker on birds for the Indiana Department of Conservation. Indiana has a considerably greater number of habitats attractive to summering "white herons" than Ohio, and numerous letters were received from many localities of that state reporting herons in flocks of 50 to 600. Mr. Esten believes that the total number of both species in Indiana in 1930 must have been considerably in excess of 25,000.

A glance at the distribution maps shows that about three-fourths of all records received were from the western half of Ohio. Concentrations occurred at all of the larger reservoirs of the state, at the western end of Lake Erie, and along the Scioto and Miami River Val-

leys. Many of the smaller tributaries of the Ohio River in the southwestern part of the state were attractive to herons. Both species were scarcely reported from the eastern, rough, Appalachian third of the state except in the valleys of some of the larger streams such as those of the Hocking, Muskingum, and Tuscarawas Rivers.

During the months of July, August, and September, the water table in most sections was undoubtedly lower than it had ever been since the coming of the first white man to Ohio. Hundreds of small lakes, ponds, swamps, marshes, and fairly large streams, became completely dry early in the summer. This fact was important in concentrating the heron population about the few remaining bodies of stagnant water and along the larger streams and rivers, making their numbers more conspicuous than ever before.

Similar conditions prevailing in most of the normal late summer range of most of these birds in southern United States, induced them, after the nesting season, to travel farther northward in greater numbers than ever before. Another factor undoubtedly important in explaining their recent abundance, is that there has recently been a rapid increase in the total population of these species in the gulf states, in part at least, due to increased protection at the breeding grounds. Another factor, perhaps still more important, was the abundance of food made readily available to herons by the retreating waters of pond and stream as the unusual drouth progressed, making it possible for large numbers of birds to concentrate in a restricted locality for a considerable time. It will be of extreme interest to make a further study of the occurrence of these birds during the coming year and to record whether any considerable number return to those localities first visited during the summer of 1930.

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