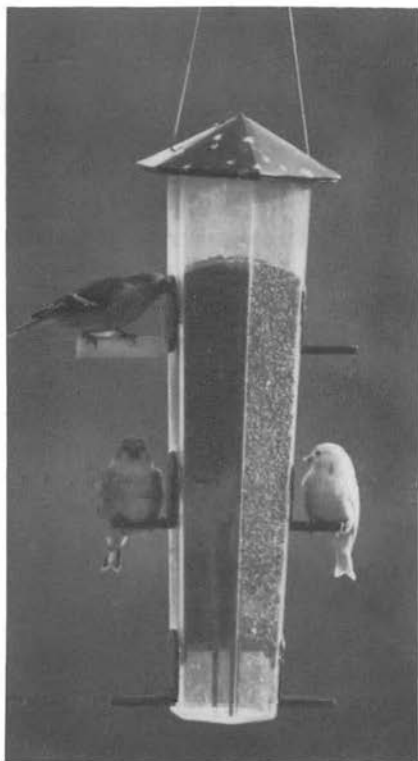


## PHOTO FIELD NOTE: A WHITE GOLDFINCH



Goldfinch "Whitey" (right)  
Photo by D. and K. Purinton

Note dated January 6, 1989.

Enclosed are a few pictures of the albino goldfinch that has been coming to our feeder for the past month. He eats mainly from our thistle feeder. He began coming in early December, and we called Massachusetts Audubon right away. We were told that the bird must be an albino and that the life span was very short. However, he has been around since and fed at our feeder today. We have named him "Whitey."

Dave and Kim Purinton, Bolton

*Editor's Note.* The short life span predicted for Whitey by Massachusetts Audubon refers to the fact that albino creatures generally provide a conspicuous target for predators and, hence, are often short-lived. When Bird Observer requested permission to publish their photo of the bird, Kim Purinton confirmed that Whitey's feathers had been entirely white, and the bill, legs, and feet, as can be seen from the photo, were very pale. She recalled that the eye color, viewed through binoculars at close distance, appeared dark, not red, but was less certain of this. Kim also added the interesting footnote that on December 11, 1989, at the same time the following year, a white goldfinch again appeared at their feeder and stayed around for about a month. Although the Purintons cannot be certain, they think it must have been Whitey, alive and well and still eager for thistle seed.

D.R.A.

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