apparently, but when the number turned out to have been used on an indigo bunting it was accepted. This bird was banded by Mr. Ralph K. Bell.

STARLING ♂
#592-52322

IS HALF AN ALBINO BETTER THAN NONE?
By Constance R. Katholi

Coniciding with Professor Hamilton's request for albino Icteridae and Starlings (EBBA News Vol 29, No. 1) I recently banded Starling #592-52322. It is a bird-with-a-white-tail. Strictly speaking, the six left retrices only were white, the others normal. This abnormality was scarcely noticeable when the bird was perched, but the effect was startling (like a Flicker) when he flew away. Additionally, the anal pteryla were white, as were the surrounding feather tracts on the lower belly, and also the crural feathering. There was some white in both the upper and the under tail coverts. Both these areas seemed sparsely feathered, and the white tail feathers were very worn and frayed.

(Joel Carl Welty in The Life of Birds, p.46, explains that unpigmented feathers are always less resistant to wear than pigmented ones, which is why the wing-tip primaries of otherwise white birds are heavily pigmented, for example, gulls, storks, herons, etc.)

Professor Hamilton's project is concerned with the role that coloration of birds plays in maintaining body temperature. I quote from a letter of his, March 18, 1966; "It is obvious that a black bird absorbs more solar radiation than a brown or white one. Will this in turn reduce its energy expended in keeping warm? Preliminary experiments with zilora finches suggest that this is true. If it is, then it is possible that the significance of black in birds is to enable them to get by with less energy. Partial albinos, however, are valueless for such metabolism studies."

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