

GENERAL NOTES.

The European Cormorant in New Jersey.—The status of *Phalacrocorax carbo carbo* as a bird of New Jersey has been somewhat in doubt. Indeed until the publication of the shooting of a specimen on the Georgia coast (Auk, 1931, p. 279) I do not recall a definite record from anywhere south of Long Island. It is therefore a satisfaction to be able to record a bird in immature plumage secured by Mr. Joseph Harrison, on October 21, 1929, near Salem, N. J., at the head of Delaware Bay.

This specimen he has generously presented to the Academy of Natural Sciences where it is now preserved. He states that it was in company with another apparently of the same kind.

It shows a considerable amount of pure white on the middle of the abdomen and breast which together with its large size and the presence of fourteen rectrices establishes its identity beyond doubt. The central pair of rectrices are, by the way, only partly grown and would therefore appear to be molted at a different time from the remainder, unless this individual is for some reason abnormal.

The old name of "Common Cormorant" has been changed to "European Cormorant" in the new edition of the "A. O. U. Check-List," as it was distinctly misleading, so far as America is concerned, where the bird is anything but common, our "common" Cormorant being the Double-crested species. Such vernacular names may be the cause of many an erroneous record which has doubtless been the case with the species in the past.—WITMER STONE, *Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia.*

Notes on Herons at Scammons Lagoon.—On a recent trip down the Mexican coast in the yacht "Valero III," G. Allan Hancock of Los Angeles, owner, the Zoological Society party stopped at Scammons Lagoon to collect specimens for our aviary. On August 8, we found nesting there a good many Snowy Herons, Louisiana Herons, Black-crowned Night Herons, and a few Reddish Egrets. We also saw a few dozen Yellow-crowned Night Herons, but could identify no nests. Our time at this bird colony was very limited due to the weather conditions and I am sorry not to be able to make a more detailed report as to numbers. Most of the Snowy Egrets (*Egretta thula brewsteri*) were still on eggs, although anywhere from twenty to twenty-five nests contained young birds. We brought back seven specimens of the latter, two Reddish Egrets for the Mexican government and fifteen Louisiana Herons.—BELLE J. BENCHLEY, *Zoological Garden, San Diego, Calif.*

Experiences in Breeding Egrets in Captivity.—Apropos of the Scammons Lagoon trip, the fact that we have this year raised in our great flying cage in the Zoological Garden one young Reddish Egret may be of interest. The parents of this bird were brought to the Zoo from Scammons Lagoon in 1928, being very young fledglings at that time. This year they

built their nest in a eucalyptus tree on a branch overhanging one of the ponds, at least thirty feet above the floor level. When we first discovered the nest, an American Egret male bird, which we had had in the cage for several years, was occupying it. As we had recently had a second American Egret shipped in from Panama, we hoped for a few days that this nest might belong to the white birds, the male bird having displayed symptoms of home making each year during the nesting season. Closer observation convinced us that the nest was really that of the Reddish Egrets. Two eggs were laid but one was pushed from the nest and destroyed. During the period of incubation, the American Egret shared the vigil with the two Reddish Egrets. When he would approach the nest, usually about nine o'clock in the morning, he always carried a stick in his mouth and, as he got close to the edge, whichever one of the real owners was incubating would stand up and accept the stick from him and lay it on the edge of the nest. It would then fly down to the feeding ground with apparent confidence that the nest would be properly cared for in its absence. Before settling down to cover the eggs, the white Egret would pick up his stick and work it carefully into the nest on the outer edge. This is the habit with the Reddish Egrets under the same circumstances. This ceremony was performed many times regardless of which bird was going on relief duty. The arrangement seemed perfectly amicable. The white Egret took his turn both in feeding and brooding until the young Egret was ready to leave the nest.—BELLE J. BENCHLEY, *Zoological Garden, San Diego, Calif.*

Egrets at Quincy, Ill.—During the last several years I have noted repeated reference in 'The Auk' to the sporadic appearance of egrets throughout the northern states. Until 1928 such a visit was of occasional occurrence along the Mississippi River this far north. However, during the last three years, American Egrets have increased until during August of this year it was a common sight to see numbers of them fishing from almost any sand bar. Associated with them were numbers of Great Blue Herons and also some immature specimens of the Little Blue Heron.

On August 30, 1931, I watched more than thirty of the immature Little Blues (*Florida caerulea*), settle about an inlet of a river sand bar. The following week I was called to the river front by the city engineer. With his surveying instruments, I was able to count eighteen American Egrets (*Casmerodius albus egretta*), three Great Blue Herons (*Ardea herodias herodias*), and several of the immature Little Blue Herons. They were feeding on a mud bar across the river.

Yesterday I visited the Duck Island Hunting Club on the Illinois River and talked to the keeper who says that for three years the "Great White Cranes," as he called them, have been very numerous. To verify this he took me to Buckbrush Lake where I counted 168 Great Blue Herons, 64 American Egrets, two Little Blues, and some American Bitterns (*Botaurus lentiginosus*), either standing in the shallow water or upon the shore.