

notice of ships, either liners or fishing craft, except to fly away if they approach too close." And again my experience is very different from his, for those I saw in St. George's Channel in July, 1930, acted precisely like their larger relatives; they certainly appeared to take notice of our ship, for they kept along with it and crossed and recrossed our bows. In a short paper printed in the 'Bulletin of the Essex County Ornithological Club' for 1930 I noted this habit of the Shearwaters, as well as the corresponding, though different, behavior of the Storm Petrels and the Fulmar, and indulged in a little speculation on the origin of a habit that would seem to be of no particular practical use to the bird.—FRANCIS H. ALLEN, *West Roxbury, Mass.*

**Some Observations of the European Teal.**—In 1923 when Mr. Ludlow Griscom's 'Birds of the New York City Region' was published the European Teal (*Nettion crecca*) was listed as an accidental visitant from the Old World. J. G. Bell had reported several specimens from Long Island in 1858 and earlier; and two others had been shot out of a flock of Green-winged Teal (*Nettion carolinense*) at Merrick in mid-December, 1900.

Within the last decade *Nettion crecca* has either shown a decided local increase or else field observers have suddenly become conscious of the possibility of this species and the ease with which the drake can be identified even at a long distance. At any rate, to-day the European Teal can be regarded as a rather regular bird around New York City and we can quite constantly depend on seeing one, two or even three drakes of this species in a few chosen localities on Long Island any day from mid-November to early April.

On March 7, 1936, I observed two drake European Teal in a flock of Green-wings on the Hempstead Reservoir of Long Island. There was a third bird resting on a mud flat which I at first took to be a European Teal because of the conspicuous white scapular stripe. When this individual took to the water, however, it was at once suggestive that he was a hybrid for not alone did he possess the distinct scapular stripe and other marks of *crecca* but also the white bar on either side of the breast characteristic of *carolinense*. This bird was still present on the following morning when Messrs. R. P. Allen, R. T. Peterson and the writer visited the reservoir and we decided that in all probability it was a hybrid of *Nettion carolinense* × *Nettion crecca*.

Such a cross should be fairly regular in a place where both species occur for it is not a very rare sight in early spring on Hempstead Reservoir to see drakes of both the European and Green-winged Teals performing before the same duck. So far as I can ascertain the courtship demonstration of both species is practically identical and the drake Green-winged Teals show the same tolerance to competition from a drake European Teal as they do to competition from a drake of their own species. The entire courtship performance is rather dignified and impressive: the competing drakes hold their bodies high, partly erect their head feathers and circle the demure duck every now and then opening their bills wide and uttering a mellow *peep peep* with each forward thrust of the head. The pursued duck seems well pleased with the attentions as long as each suitor keeps his distance, only jabbing in disapproval when a bold fellow tries to get too familiar.

Since most of the wintering and migrant waterfowl on the Atlantic seaboard come from a general northwesterly direction it is likely that the European Teal occurring on Long Island represent birds from the Aleutian Islands where Mr. A. C. Bent found this species to be breeding commonly way back in 1911. And yet there is a possibility that a small number of European Teal nest somewhere in the interior of our continent and that the species is more widely distributed in the States during the non-breeding seasons than the meager records would indicate. Observers

throughout the country should be on the watch for this species.—ALLAN D. CRUICKSHANK, *Freeport, Long Island, New York.*

**Snowy Egret in Michigan.**—On August 10, 1935, Louis W. and Bernard R. Campbell collected a female Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula thula*) four miles southeast of Erie, Monroe County, Michigan, and have presented the specimen to the University of Michigan Museum of Zoology (now catalogue No. 85917). This constitutes the first unquestionable record of this species for Michigan.

Walter B. Barrows included this species in his list of Michigan birds (Michigan Bird Life, 1912: 141) on the basis of several alleged specimens. With a single exception, these records (including the one which Barrows incorrectly quoted as Norman Wood's record) were based on reports from A. B. Covert. Michigan ornithologists long ago learned the unfortunate necessity of ignoring Covert's records (Wilson Bulletin, 1913: 28) and in the case of at least two of the records here under consideration there are additional causes for doubt, not the least of which are Covert's own contradictory statements (mentioned even by Barrows). The one remaining specimen cited by Barrows is that from Kalamazoo in the collection of G. B. Sudworth. This specimen, now at the Roosevelt Wild Life Forest Experiment Station in Syracuse, was examined by Leonard W. Wing on August 19, 1932, and found to be not this species but the American Egret (*Casmerodius albus egretta*). A report of a flock of eight seen by Benjamin O. Bush near Kalamazoo "during the month of August" [1924?] (Bird Lore, 26, 1924: 402) is of some interest, although the possibility of confusion with the Little Blue Heron must certainly be kept in mind.—JOSSELYN VAN TYNE, *University of Michigan Museum of Zoology, Ann Arbor, Michigan.*

**Spring Occurrence of the American Egret in Ontario.**—In view of the scarcity of published records of the American Egret (*Casmerodius albus egretta*) from this province, it seems well to record a spring occurrence at Orillia, Simcoe County, Ontario, which is ninety miles north of Toronto.

In August, 1935, the writer accompanied by Mr. R. A. Smith, visited Mr. W. Sutherland, former taxidermist of Orillia, in search of local ornithological data. We were shown a beautifully mounted specimen of the American Egret in breeding plumage. It was adorned with 42 graceful, flowing 'aigrette' plumes. A label on the back of the case read: 'Great American Egret, April 30, 1908, Kean's Creek, foot of West Street, Orillia, Ontario.' According to Mr. Sutherland, the collector, the Egret was in company with several Great Blue Herons (*Ardea h. herodias*), when taken.

Spring records of Egrets are rare. There is a specimen in the National Museum at Ottawa, taken at Rockcliffe in the Spring of 1883 (Auk, Vol. 2, 1885, 110). One recorded by Seton (Auk, Vol. 2, 1885, 336) from Lake Nipissing in 1883, is now in the collection of the late Home Smith at the Old Mill, Toronto. There is another in the collection of J. H. Fleming of Toronto, taken at Port Union, Ontario, on May 24, 1895 (Auk, Vol. 23, 1906, 447). The writer is indebted to Mr. Sutherland for the privilege of recording this rare species.—O. E. DEVIET, *Toronto, Ontario.*

**A Red Phase of the Black-crowned Night Heron.**—To the best of my knowledge the Black-crowned Night Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax hoacelli*) has not to date been noted as having an erythristic phase. In the Dickey collection is a specimen collected at Laguna Beach, Orange County, California, on July 10, 1912, by Leon Gardner, which represents this phase in what is probably an extreme degree. It is an immature bird of unknown sex, but of just what age is uncertain since it does not