

### GENERAL NOTES

**American Egret in Minnesota.**—Minnesota's bird-minded naturalists have been watching with great interest the ever-increasing number of records of the American Egret (*Casmerodius albus egretta*) in the State during the past few years, with the hope that this bird may become a regular nesting species in Minnesota. Most of these recent records have been in late summer and fall and were probably of both adult and young birds wandering northward from their normal southern breeding range at the close of the nesting season. This movement apparently has been a normal occurrence with this species for a great many years since Kumlien and Hollister in 'Birds of Wisconsin,' published in 1903, state that "twenty-five to fifty years ago the egret was a common bird on the larger marshes and swamps . . . Of late years, three or four individuals only visit Lake Koshkonong each year where hundreds were found thirty years ago during August and September."

Very probably the decimation of the ranks of the egret by the plume hunters so reduced the species that, during the period roughly between 1880 and 1930, the few birds that did wander northward were seldom seen. A few came north during that period, however. Dr. Hvoslef of Lanesboro, Fillmore County, Minnesota (1887) reports (in T. S. Roberts, 'Birds of Minnesota,' 1: 179, 1932) the species as occasional. Dr. P. L. Hatch states ('Notes on the Birds of Minnesota,' p. 91, 1892) that it was occasionally found in the "early years" in the Minnesota River bottoms above Ft. Snelling.

These Minnesota records appear to have been very scattered until about 1933 when a number of late-summer and fall records began coming in from extreme southwestern Minnesota. Dr. T. S. Roberts, in his article, 'The Season' (in 'Bird-lore' for Nov.-Dec. 1937), mentioned a number of late-summer records from the Twin Cities southward and westward.

In 1938 a surprising invasion of these egrets occurred. Mr. Albert Van S. Pulling, Associate Biologist of the Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge, stationed at Winona, reported nearly 200 along the river in northeastern Iowa and from 50 to 100 in the bottomlands between Wabasha and the Iowa line. Mr. Phillip Nordeen, State Game Warden in Goodhue County, saw a flock of about 100 in the Mississippi bottoms near Red Wing. One record in southern Isanti County, 35 miles north of Minneapolis, was the farthest north they were reported during that year.

All these records were of extreme interest but, quoting Dr. Roberts (Bird-lore, Sept.-Oct. 1938), "the most surprising report of all comes from Dr. G. H. Luedtke of Fairmont, Martin County, Minn. On August 20, an acquaintance came to his office and reported as follows: During the latter part of May this year about 25 large white birds came to a swamp near East Chain Lake, about 10 miles southeast of Fairmont, near the Iowa line. . . . The white birds had long bushy tails [the plumes, of course]. All the long feathers disappeared after the nesting season, leaving only a stubby tail. The nests of these white birds were built low down in small willows . . . A visit in June disclosed many young in the nests. That American Egrets should come this far north to establish a nesting colony is almost unbelievable but the account seems entirely credible."

This area was watched carefully by Dr. Luedtke this season and he reports that no egrets nested there. However, the writer, while in the vicinity of Winona on July 17, was shown the nests of three pairs of American Egrets by Messrs. Pulling

and Schmidt of the staff of the Upper Mississippi Wildlife and Fish Refuge and the present note is made with the kind permission of Mr. Ray C. Steele, Superintendent of the Refuge. The birds were nesting 25 to 75 feet up in black-birch trees in the center of a colony of Great Blue Herons, Black-crowned Night Herons, and Double-crested Cormorants. Two of the nests were about 30 feet apart with the third only 100 feet distant. On this date the young were large and well-feathered although they showed some individual variation in size. A tree-top blind was built 30 feet from the two closest nests and most of one day was spent observing and photographing the birds. Colored movies recording the nesting are now in the motion-picture library of the Museum of Natural History at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis.

Another report of the nesting of this bird came from Mr. F. B. Kalash of Lakefield, Jackson County. In correspondence with Dr. Roberts Mr. Kalash wrote: "I did not see their nest but saw them very often driving from Lakefield to our cottage on Spirit Lake (Iowa). I saw them first about June 10 and now (August 23) they have two young ones almost fully grown."

These records indicate that the American Egrets in the Mississippi Valley must be reestablishing themselves in numbers approaching those of 75 years ago when they may have nested here before. At least this possibility is suggested in that Kumlien and Hollister (*Birds of Wisconsin*, 1903) reported three southern Wisconsin nestings between 1860 and 1880.

In the far West this same gratifying increase appears to be taking place. It seems then, that in the American Egret we have a bird that has responded most satisfactorily to legal protection and has actually come back from the very verge of extinction to almost its former abundance. And anyone with the slightest appreciation of the great esthetic value of these majestic fishermen certainly hopes that they will be able not only to maintain their numbers but to increase and extend their range still farther.—W. J. BRECKENRIDGE, *Museum of Natural History, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota*.

**Bahama Pintail and Cinnamon Teal in Cuba.**—Mr. Hernández Bauzá, of Havana, Cuba, sends me the following data on specimens of these ducks in his collection. A Cinnamon Teal (*Querquedula cyanoptera*), an adult male, was taken in a lagoon at Campo Florido, near the north coast of the Province of Habana on February 28, 1932. Three specimens (two males and one female) of the Bahama Pintail (*Dafila b. bahamensis*) were taken "in a single shot" at Punta de Tarara, Province of Habana, on December 29, 1932. I had the pleasure of seeing these specimens when in Havana last winter.

According to Barbour's 'Birds of Cuba' (Mem. Nuttall Ornith. Club, no. 6, 1923) there is but one previous record of the occurrence of either of these ducks in Cuba, while that of the Cinnamon Teal constitutes the second definite record of the species in the West Indies.—JAMES BOND, *Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*.

**An unusual roadside casualty in southern Maryland.**—On May 22, 1938, the writer, accompanied by Clarence F. Smith, found near Marberry, Maryland, the body of a freshly killed, adult Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*) that had recently been struck by an automobile. The occurrence of the bird in this locality was somewhat surprising, inasmuch as it was on the side of a hill in heavily wooded country almost a mile from the Potomac River. The date is nearly a month later than the average departure of Red-breasted Mergansers from this vicinity and is