

GENERAL NOTES

Three Brown Pelicans in Illinois.—On Saturday, April 24, 1948, three "great birds" flew over the city of St. Louis, resulting in news stories in two St. Louis newspapers. The following day, James Nielson, Wallace Elmsley, and the writer were doing field work 30 miles south of Quincy, when three Brown Pelicans, *Pelecanus occidentalis*, flew not 50 feet above our heads. I studied them carefully with eight-power binoculars; there was no question of their identity. They were probably the same three birds that were seen over St. Louis the previous day.

In so far as I can discover, there are but four previous records of the Brown Pelican in Illinois. In the Steinheuer collection is a skin of a bird killed on a lake south of Vandalia. Benjamin Gault (Check-List of the Birds of Illinois, 1922: 35) says, "Rare straggler from the gulf coast. But one positive record, viz;—Lacon, Marshall County (Gault) on authority of Judge Barnes." Robert Ridgway (The Ornithology of Illinois, 2: 200, 1913) says, "The brown pelican is barely entitled to a place in the list of Illinois birds, on account of a single specimen having been seen (not taken) by Mr. C. K. Worthen, near Warsaw (see Bull. Nutt. Orn. Club V 1880, page 31)." In 1913, the writer saw one over the Mississippi at Quincy.—T. E. MUSSELMAN, Quincy, Illinois.

American Egrets near Quebec City, Quebec.—A flight of American Egrets, *Casmerodius a. egretta*, is known to have occurred in the summer of 1948 in north-eastern United States. Some at least reached the Province of Quebec, their first occurrence in the vicinity of Quebec City, as far as is known. On August 1, 1948, Mr. Francois Hamel saw, with binoculars at about 300 feet, two egrets at St. Francois on the Island of Orleans, Quebec. He clearly noted the yellow bill of the American Egret. On the following August 13, a call to the Quebec Zoological Garden from Everell, a few miles northeast of Quebec City, brought Dr. J. A. Brassard, director of the Zoo, and myself to that place where a man had seen a flock of "white cranes" on the shore. There were, in fact, nearly a dozen white birds standing on the shore about half a mile away. With binoculars, they looked very much like egrets, and a closer approach to one of these birds clearly showed that it was an American egret. The distance and bad lighting, it was 8 p. m., did not permit a clear view of its yellow bill, but similarity in size with a Great Blue Heron, standing a few feet from the egret, helped in identification. A few minutes later the bird took flight toward the Island of Orleans. We were told by our host that the flock of "white cranes" had come to that shore at Everell every day in the morning and in late afternoon for nearly two weeks. They were very shy and hard to approach. Later, Mr. Louis A. Lord, taxidermist at the Quebec Provincial Museum, was told by a hunter that "white cranes, never seen before" were still to be found near St. Peter, Island of Orleans, in mid-September.—RAYMOND CAYOUILLE, Quebec Zoological Society, Charlesbourg, Quebec.

Lesser Snow Goose and Blue Goose at Lexington, Virginia.—On November 18, 1948, at a small fish pond on the farm of Joshua Womeldorf near Lexington, I collected an immature male (?) Lesser Snow Goose, *Chen h. hyperborea*, and an immature female (?) Blue Goose, *Chen caerulescens*. Drs. A. Wetmore and H. Friedmann kindly examined the skins and confirmed the identifications. The birds were in poor flesh, the Snow Goose weighing four pounds, three ounces, and the Blue Goose, three pounds, 14 ounces. The Snow Goose was heavily infested with ectoparasites, identified by Robert T. Mitchell as *Trinoton querquedulae* (L.). The Lesser Snow Goose is

rare in Virginia, even on the coast. The only other records for these species in the mid-Appalachian region are those listed by Maurice Brooks for West Virginia (A Check-List of West Virginia Birds, 1944: 14): two Lesser Snow Geese and a Blue Goose seen near Bluefield in 1942, and a Blue Goose taken near Morgantown, November 21, 1914.—J. J. MURRAY, *Lexington, Virginia*.

Ducks Continue to Nest after Brush Fire at Castalia, Ohio.—On April 17, 1948, a part of the Resthaven Wildlife Sanctuary at Castalia, Ohio, was accidentally burned. The burn covered approximately 100 acres of land strip-mined for marl many years ago and now supporting a mixed growth of herbaceous and woody plants. The area was visited April 24 to confirm reports of mortality of rabbits and damage to pheasant and duck nests caused by the fire. The fire had been hot enough to burn all of the dead herbaceous cover and, a week later, no green sprouts had appeared through the ashes and charred remains of plant stems.

Intensive searching in a two-acre section of the burned area revealed the blackened fragments of several pheasant and duck eggs. In addition, a Mallard, *Anas p. platyrhynchos*, and a Black Duck, *Anas rubripes*, were flushed from nests which had been completely burned over and had no cover remaining around them. The mallard nest contained five scorched and four unscorched eggs, the latter apparently having been laid after the fire. The black duck nest contained 12 eggs, all blackened on one side by the fire. The nest had been relined with down and the female had evidently been incubating the eggs for a week following the fire.

In an attempt to obtain photographs of the incubating hens, April 26, both hens were again flushed from their nests. A final visit, May 14, showed that both nests had been disrupted and the eggs destroyed. Messrs. F. B. Chapman, Roy Hooker, Burt Karbler, E. D. Martin and Clifford Morrow of the Ohio Division of Conservation assisted the writer in his observations.—DANIEL L. LEEDY, *Ohio Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit, Ohio State University, Columbus 10, Ohio*.

Gadwall Nesting in Maryland.—The recorded nesting of the Gadwall, *Anas strepera*, by Griffith (Auk, 63: 436-438, 1946) in salt marshes on Bombay Hook Refuge in Delaware and Pea Island Refuge in North Carolina since 1939 suggested the possibility of the species breeding in suitable coastal marshes between these two points.

On May 18, 1948, while engaged in studies of salt marshes on the eastern shore of Maryland, the writers noticed several pairs of Gadwalls frequenting the tidal ponds and guts one to two miles southeast of Dames Quarter in Somerset County. The males of each pair exhibited definite signs of defense behavior, vigorously chasing the females of other pairs flying in the near vicinity. Because of the late date and the fact that the species was not known to breed in Maryland, it was decided to watch them more closely.

Egg shells of Gadwalls, probably broken by a raccoon, were discovered on May 19; on the following day one female was flushed from her nest containing eight eggs. This nest was built in a clump of switchgrass, *Panicum virgatum*, under a hightide bush, *Iva frutescens*, and was located on the side of a road bank adjoining a salt-meadow cordgrass, *Spartina patens*, marsh. The nearest water was in a ditch on the other side of the road, a distance of 15 feet. This is in agreement with other records on the east coast where the species has been found nesting in similar salt marshes not far from water.

Lack of time prevented us from searching for other nests, but at least seven pairs were seen in an area approximately 1.5 miles long by .75 miles wide. Several of