

## CATTLE EGRET, A NEW BIRD IN ALABAMA

By JAMES E. KEELER

A male Cattle Egret, *Bulbulcus ibis*, was collected by the author on November 8, 1957. This represents a new bird record for Alabama. The bird was observed standing about five feet from the edge of the pavement at the mouth of Chocalata Bay, two miles east of the drawbridge on the Mobile Causeway in Baldwin County. The bird showed no fear of the hundreds of automobiles and trucks passing within ten feet of it.

The author first passed by before realizing that the bird merited a second look. The first impression was that of a sick Snowy Egret. After turning around and approaching to within 1,000 feet of the bird, an Adult Little Blue Heron flew to within three feet of it and stopped. It was then apparent then that the bird was not a Snowy Egret since it was considerably smaller than the Little Blue Heron. The head feathers of the Cattle Egret were roughed-up in much the same manner that is so commonly displayed by adult Egrets and Herons when approaching their nesting sites.

The bird was collected and the specimen will be deposited in the collection of the University of Alabama. The food contents were examined and contained the following: Brown Crickets, 2; Mole Cricket, 1; Earwigs, 6; Ground Beetle, 1; Slug, 1. No aquatic insects or crustaceans were present.

It is the author's opinion that this bird was blown in by a storm. A violent wind and rain storm covered the area during the night before the bird was collected. High winds continued until noon on November 8. Direction of the wind was from the south-south west. The author made numerous trips along the Causeway on November 7, while collecting duck-kill information and the Cattle Egret was not seen on that date.

The bird was snow-white with the exception of a blending of buff on the back of the head. This was not seen until the bird was held in the hand. The bright yellow bill should be the best identifying mark for this species in the field. The only other Heron or Egret with this mark is the much larger American Egret which could not possibly be confused with it due to its large size. The remaining Herons and Egrets have either dark or bi-colored bills.

State of Alabama, Department of Conservation  
Montgomery, Alabama

## CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS, ALABAMA, 1957

Compiled by THOMAS A. IMHOF and LOIS MCCOLLOUGH

Species	Dauphin Island	Marion	Birmingham		Year
			1957	Highest No.	
Common Loon	18	2	1	1	4 yrs.
Horned Grebe	394			5	1942
Pied-billed Grebe	8	39	84	113	1956
White Pelican	6				
Brown Pelican	2				
Double-crested Cormorant	585	1		1	1943
Great Blue Heron	37	8	4	6	'49 & '55
Little Blue Heron	3				
Common Egret	2				
Louisiana Heron	5				
Black-crowned Night Heron	3	1			
Mallard	2	87	2	240	1942
Black Duck	11	1		11	1948
Gadwall	13	19		25	1947
Green-winged Teal		4		15	1943
Am. Widgeon (Baldpate)	2	2		10	1948
Ring-necked Duck	2	49	100	1,100	1941
Canvasback	4	2	31	59	1955
Greater Scaup	52				
Lesser Scaup	1,850	19	57	802	1942
Common Goldeneye	213		1	2	1955
Bufflehead	1			4	1943
Common (Am.) Scoter	8				
Ruddy Duck		3	2	150	1942
Red-breasted Merganser	173		2	2 tie	1956
Turkey Vulture	6	39		16	1947
Black Vulture	17	59		6	1947
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1			2	1952
Cooper's Hawk	1		5	5	1957
Red-tailed Hawk	2	4	4	14	1953
Red-shouldered Hawk	5	4	6	7	1955
Bald Eagle	1				
Marsh Hawk	8	2	1	1	11 yrs.
Pigeon Hawk	1		1		
					first count recorded
Sparrow Hawk	21	7	9	9	1957
Bob-white	7		20	48	1954
Clapper Rail	44				
Virginia Rail	2				
Sora	3	1			
Common (Fla.) Gallinule	2				
Am. Coot		17	365	15,000	1942
Am. Oystercatcher	2				
Piping Plover	117				
Semipalmated Plover	57				
Snowy Plover	3				
Killdeer	13	565	230	230	1957
Black-bellied Plover	194				
Ruddy Turnstone	122				
Am. Woodcock	2				
Common (Wilson's) Snipe	2	137	16	34	1956
Spotted Sandpiper	2				
Willet	5				