

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				

Species	Dauphin Island	Marion	Birmingham		
			1957	Highest No.	Year
Greater Yellowlegs	22				
Least Sandpiper	9	145		22	1956
Dunlin (Red-back)	631				
Dowitcher	16				
Semipalmated Sandpiper	10				
Western Sandpiper	154				
Sanderling	76				
Herring Gull	345			7	1952
Ring-billed Gull	672			2	1950
Laughing Gull	521				
Forster's Tern	11				
Common Tern	1				
Royal Tern	81				
Caspian Tern	200				
(Unidentified Gulls & Terns)	1,250				
Black Skimmer	140				
Mourning Dove	29	6	313	313	1957
Ground Dove	4				
Barn Owl	1				
Screech Owl		1		1	5 yrs.
Great Horned Owl	1	2		2	3 yrs.
Barred Owl		6	1	1	9 yrs.
Long-Eared Owl		1			
Whip-poor-will	3				
Belted Kingfisher	34	10	16	16	1957
Yellow-shafted Flicker	24	29	78	82	1955
Pileated Woodpecker	2	4	20	20 tie	1947
Red-bellied Woodpecker	18	44	43	43	1957
Red-headed Woodpecker		11	6	31	'50 & '53
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	4	4	17	17	1957
Hairy Woodpecker	5	3	11	12	'44 & '45
Downy Woodpecker	6	7	30	34	1952
Red-Cockaded Woodpecker	1		4	12	1953
Western Kingbird	1				
Eastern Phoebe	31	15	5	8	1956
Horned Lark		355		14	1955
Tree Swallow	530				
Rough-winged Swallow	1				
Blue Jay	75	40	166	166	1957
Common Crow	16	470	117	117	1957
Fish Crow	358				
Carolina Chickadee	8	21	107	112	'52 & '53
Tufted Titmouse	9	19	86	88	1952
White-breasted Nuthatch			38	38	1957
Red-breasted Nuthatch			4	13	1953
Brown-headed Nuthatch	12	2	45	45	1957
Brown Creeper	1		2	12	1949
House Wren	27	2	2	3	1950
Winter Wren		10	7	19	1943
Bewick's Wren	5	5	3	10	1953
Carolina Wren	42	26	64	107	1952
Long-billed Marsh Wren	14	1			
Short-billed Marsh Wren	59	1		4	1952
Mockingbird	87	35	212	212	1957
Catbird	5	3		3	1956

Species	Dauphin Island	Marion	Birmingham		
			1957	Highest No.	Year
Brown Thrasher	56	31	18	21	1943
Robin	400	378	483	483	1957
Hermit Thrush	14	14	21	38	1952
Eastern Bluebird	162	50	72	158	1952
Blue-grey Gnatcatcher	13	2			
Golden-crowned Kinglet	5	14	83	219	1946
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	23	46	71	125	1956
Water Pipit	41	271	42	220	1952
Cedar Waxwing	48	40	310	397	1948
Loggerhead Shrike	46	27	20	24	1955
Starling	41	268	18,400	18,400	1957
Solitary Vireo	1			1	1955
Orange-crowned Warbler	5	1		1	1949
Myrtle Warbler	1,100	165	70	117	1955
Pine Warbler	80	3	27	67	1955
Palm Warbler	18	3	4	15	1946
Yellowthroat	27	7	3	5	1940
House Sparrow	23	160	350	388	1934
Eastern Meadowlark	87	188	322	533	1949
Western Meadowlark	1	2			
Red-winged Blackbird	1,300	4	233	800	1951
Rusty Blackbird	37	37	153	5,000	1953
Brewer's Blackbird	7				
Boat-tailed Grackle	7				
Common Grackle	15	70	114	15,000	1950
Brown-headed Cowbird	35	1	118	554	1956
Cardinal	112	126	333	333	1957
Black-headed Grosbeak	1				
Purple Finch	2	1	138	186	1949
Pine Siskin		2	7	51	1949
Am. Goldfinch	117	19	376	495	1954
Rufous-sided Towhee	108	83	266	300	1955
Savannah Sparrow	32	145	29	78	1946
Sharp-tailed Sparrow	24				
Seaside Sparrow	18				
Vesper Sparrow		16	15	41	1951
Bachman's Sparrow	3	5		6	1950
Slate-colored Junco	12	27	814	814	1957
Chipping Sparrow	18	27	110	188	1949
Field Sparrow	20	76	292	361	1956
White-crowned Sparrow	2	42	4	47	1953
White-throated Sparrow	141	322	691	691	1957
Fox Sparrow		11	28	28	1957
Lincoln's Sparrow		2			
Swamp Sparrow	83	75	48	139	1953
Song Sparrow	27	105	158	278	1956
Lapland Longspur		65			
Smith's Longspur		1			
Total Species	137	95	80		
Total Individuals	13,900		26,500		
Observers	8	4	21		
Parties	5	2	6		
Party-hours	42	20	52 1/2		
Party-miles	250	70	209		
Date, December, 1957	21	27	28		
Number of years taken	2	3	22		

(All 3 counts, 154)

Names of Observers (B—B'ham, D—Dauphin, M—Marion): Ruth Brunson B, Frederick T. Carney B, Blanche H. Chapman B, Ruth Copeland B, F. Bozeman Daniel B, Blanche E. Dean B, Mildred Ferris B, Peggy Friedman B, M. Wilson Gaillard D, Rosemary Gaymer D, Emmylou Grimley B, Ellen Heine D, Dan C. Holliman B & M, Thomas A. Imhof D & M & B, Electa D. Levi D, Lois McCollough D & M & B, Clustie McTyeire M & B, Morton H. Perry B, Robert Perry B, M. F. Prather B, Dorothy Roberts B, Idalene F. Snead B, Grace Snead B, Ava R. Tabor D, Edwin O. Willis D, Harriet H. Wright B, Larry Wright B. (Total 27 observers, 3 from Louisiana and 1 from Ontario.)

The following more unusual observations deserve comment: Brown Pelican (Numbers on the Gulf Coast have been greatly reduced and many thoughtful ornithologists in the area blame Audrey and the 2 subsequent near-hurricanes.) Common Scoter (Flock of 8 seen in Mobile Bay from the Heron Bay Cutoff Bridge at the Cedar Point Lab by Imhof). Spotted Sandpiper (One seen by Ed Willis at Cedar Point, the other by Imhof and Gaillard in Coden Bayou. These are the 3rd and 4th winter records for Alabama.) Long-eared Owl (One seen and heard by McCollough and McTyeire in pines at the Marion Fish Hatchery). Whip-poor-will (3 heard calling and seen hawking insects from the tips of pines at dusk at Coden—the 6th winter record for Alabama; by Imhof and Gaillard). Western Kingbird (One seen by Tabor and Levi at Ft. Gaines on Dauphin, the first winter record for Alabama). Rough-winged Swallow (One picked out of the numerous Tree Swallows flying over the marsh near Cedar Point, by Lois McCollough). Western Meadowlark (With careful watching this species will probably prove to be present in Alabama every winter.) McCollough saw and heard one singing near Bellingrath Gardens, and Imhof saw one and heard another singing at Lakeland Farm. Both observers collaborated in collecting the first specimen for the state last year at Marion, and are acquainted with the field marks of the species and also the song. These 2 records are the 2nd and 3rd for this winter in Alabama, the other at Ft. Morgan, Nov. 29 (Stevenson and Monroe). Brewer's Blackbird (Flock seen near Bellingrath Gardens by McCollough. This species is actually more common than the Rusty Blackbird on the coast of Alabama. The birds invariably flock by themselves, and occur in pastures, parks, freshly-plowed land, and around farm animals like the

Cowbird. This winter they have also been recorded from Elberta; Barachias, Montgomery Co. and Lamison, Wilcox Co.). Black-headed Grosbeak (One male seen twice by Tabor and Levi near the school on Dauphin. Miss Tabor had one to spend the winter last year at her feeder in Thibodaux, La.) Lincoln's Sparrow (Two birds at the Marion Fish Hatchery mean that this is the second winter that they are wintering there, probably the farthest east that the species winters regularly.) Smith's Longspur (Third record for Alabama, seen by Imhof and Holliman among the Lapland Longspurs at Lakeland Farm. The other 2 records include a specimen collected by Imhof at Robert's Field in Birmingham).

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