

On September 15, 1956, I was walking with (the well-known Long Island ornithologist) Gilbert S. Raynor and my 16-year-old son Dennis through a damp grassy meadow at the head of Fish Creek, a tidal tributary on the east side of the lower Carmans River, Brookhaven, Long Island. This meadow lies between a cattail marsh and the extensive dry oak and pine woods west of Mastic. Suddenly two very small dark birds flushed from under our feet and fluttered weakly off into a blackberry tangle about 20 feet away. At that moment we heard an unfamiliar scolding note, and we saw an adult Short-billed Marsh Wren watching us from a point close to where the two birds had disappeared.

We all had excellent views of the adult wren as it remained in the open, perched on a mallow stem for about a half-minute, permitting us to obtain positive identification. It was obviously distressed by our presence, and continued to scold at intervals with a ticking note. When it eventually disappeared, we started to move forward again, flushing two more small birds. This time we had good views of them: one permitting us almost to catch it with our hands before it dived into the rank grass. These were unquestionably young Short-billed Marsh Wrens, not yet fully fledged so that they were unable to flutter more than a few feet. From the weakness of their flight and their small size it would have been impossible for them to have traveled more than 100 yards from their nest, but we were unable to locate it in the heavy grasses. Bent (1948, U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull 195:269) gives 12-14 days in the nest after hatching. These birds, therefore, were hatched about September 1, indicating an egg date about ten days later than that previously recorded by Cruickshank.

In early June 1954, Raynor and I located an adult bird about a quarter of a mile away from the location reported above, but we found no evidence of its being a breeding bird. According to the records of John J. Elliott, the last summering area for this species on Long Island other than this was at Massapequa about five years ago, except for one or two summer records from Springfield at the extreme eastern end of the Jamaica Bay marshes. — Dennis Puleston, Brookhaven, Long Island.

Cattle Egrets on Long Island — On May 21, 1954 a Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*) was observed in an East Moriches, Long Island poultry farm, the first record for this species in the State. The bird was seen by many naturalists, including the writer; it remained in the vicinity for almost a week, spending most of its time inside the wire netting pens with a flock of white turkeys. It was a mature specimen with a touch of buff on head and back and with yellow legs.

A second bird was recently seen in Brookhaven, also on the South Shore of Long Island. It was reported to the writer on last October 20. I watched the bird on this date and on every subsequent day until its departure on the 25th. It was seen on the west bank of the lower Carmans River, in the vicinity of the public boat landing. Although cars and boats were frequently moving around it, it was quite tame and permitted approach to within 25 feet, affording excellent opportunities for photography. I notified the well-known Long Island naturalist, Leroy Wilcox, who obtained some good close-ups. It spent most of its time near the water's edge, hunting the plentiful crickets, grasshoppers, mantids and other insects in patches of rank weeds. A local fisherman, William Englehardt, informed me that he had tried to tempt it with small river fish (*Fundulus*), but it was not interested. However, on several occasions he caught large numbers of crickets under boards, and fed them to the bird by tossing them in its direction.

This specimen was an immature, having dark blacking-brown, instead of yellow legs; the eyes and bill were bright yellow, and the plumage pure white. It can be assumed that this bird was hatched last spring, probably in this country.

Although the bird spent most of the day along the river bank, it made several flights into the woods to the north, presumably to a roost. Several times I saw it perched on stakes out in the river, an unusual choice for this species. The last it was seen here was the first day of a severe cold wave, which would have reduced the insect supply and is presumed to be the reason for the bird's departure.

Due to the remarkably rapid increase of this species in the United States since its first appearance a few years ago, and the reported extension of its breeding range

as far north as the Carolinas, we can expect more frequent occurrences of the Cattle Egret in New York State in the coming years. — Dennis Puleston, Brookhaven, Long Island.

Information requested on color marked birds. — Two requests for assistance in tracing the movements of color marked birds have been received. Although both requests indicate a stress on fall reports, this tardy notice may help provide some information on late winter and spring records.

The first request comes from Tom Barry of Cornell. He would like reports of observations of neck-banded Brant. Several hundred of these birds were banded in this fashion by a group sponsored by Cornell University and the Canadian Wildlife Service on Southampton Island. The yellow plastic bands are fastened by a slip-proof falconer's knot, with a four-inch streamer that is usually seen when the bird is at rest hanging down in front or when in flight sticking out in back. The brilliant yellow is usually visible with binoculars at long range. Sight records should include: (1) date, (2) number with neck-bands, (3) total number in flock, (4) location, and (5) additional observations of unmarked Brant. Information should be sent to Thomas W. Barry, Conservation Department, Fernow Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York. Contributors will receive a summary of the information received.

The second request is from the Fish and Wildlife Service, kindly forwarded by Lawrence S. Smith, Refuge Manager of Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge. Mr. Smith's letter tells of cooperation of Montezuma personnel in color marking Icterids. A gold lacquer has been sprayed on the upper surface of Red-wings and Grackles banded in Tyre Township (vicinity of Montezuma). In similar projects silver lacquer has been used in New Jersey and red plastic neck bands in Delaware. Information on observations of any of these birds should be sent to Bird Banding Office, Patuxent Research Refuge, Laurel, Maryland. Mr. Smith notes that within two weeks of the initiation of the project in July reports were received of Montezuma birds in New Jersey. GRR

Caspian Tern in Fulton County. — On October 3, 1956, game warden Mark Putman picked up a dead immature Caspian Tern at Canada Lake, Fulton County, in the southern part of Adirondack State Park. Local residents told Putman that they had seen the bird in the area for two or three days prior to October 3 and that the bird was obviously in a weakened condition. Putman took the specimen to Amsterdam where identification was made by Margaret Fitzgerald and Esly Hallenbeck. The Caspian Tern is normally considered a coastal species, but it does breed sporadically in the Great Lakes region. The last previous report of the Caspian Tern from Region 8 was in September 1944, a sight record of two individuals at a reservoir just south of Schenectady — J. K. Meritt, 16 Ellen Lane, Scotia 2.

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