

NOTES

Elmira's Night Herons — For at least fifteen years a flock of Black-crowned Night Herons has roosted in the trees on Elm Street, near West Third Street in the city of Elmira. As their numbers grew, they gradually spread around the corner on Third Street, forming quite a colony. Five years ago (1952) they built their first nest there and successfully reared young. They became a great nuisance in this section of the city, not far from the business section nor from the river. Area residents tried each year to get permission from the police, the health department or game warden to do away with them but to no avail. The birds were protected and the law forbade shooting in the city.

This year (1957) there were five nests and a great many herons roosting, making much noise at night, and making the streets filthy with dead fish and excrement. The nearby citizens were desperate and finally appealed to the City Council which, in turn, took the matter to the State and Federal Conservation agencies in Albany and Boston. They received permission for the police to shoot the birds. Some people deplored this so the Council decided first to try frightening away the birds by streams of water from the fire hose and to have the nests torn down, before trying the shooting. This method seems to be succeeding (as this is written in late summer). An occasional bird does return, but does not remain and at last the people are able to sleep through the night.

Apparently this nesting in cities is not as unusual as was first thought. A similar situation occurred in nearby Corning several years ago, and Roman candles were used to disperse the birds.

Over Labor Day one of the men working in the crusade to get rid of our herons visited Washington, D. C. and was surprised to see a similar situation in a locality in that city. The people disliked it there but were making no attempt to rid themselves of the nuisance.

We shall eagerly await next spring to see if any of our Elmira colony return or if it has been dislodged permanently — Olive R. York, (Mrs. Harry C.), Elmira.

A black and white Redstart — Part albinism in birds is not very unusual and such individuals are occasionally met with in the field. For example, birds like Robins may show an over-all paleness with whitish or buffy breast. Another form of albinism tends to make a bird patchy, and occasionally we see English Sparrows with such white blotches or spots on the upper parts. Again, feathers on one side of a bird may match those on the other side, as for example a Seaside Sparrow seen on several occasions into November at Oak Beach about a decade ago. This bird had Junco-like white outer tail-feathers. Several years previous to this a Sharp-tailed Sparrow flew around the Idlewild marshes with a well defined white wing patch on each wing and was seen for several weeks.

The two birds to be described apparently cannot be classified under such hit and miss albinism as described above, but rather as black and white birds lacking color pigment.

The first is a Bobolink which was shown in color movies, with several excellent close-ups, at the annual dinner and meeting of the Linnaean Society of New York, March 12, 1957, by Angelo DeAngelo in his illustrated talk 'Birds of Sussex County' (New Jersey).

As we know the Bobolink is a black and white bird, except for the nape which is buffy. One of DeAngelo's birds showed the nape to be white, thus making this Bobolink a black and white bird. DeAngelo spoke of the absence of this buffy and, while remarking on the remote possibility of this cause through ageing, he said the bird was extremely vivacious and appeared to be young and vigorous.

The second individual under observation was a male American Redstart (*Setophaga reticilla*) seen by Eugene T. Mudge at Northport, May 8-10, 1956. Whereas Bobolinks deviate from black and white in one area, the male Redstart has six patches of salmon-orange. In Mudge's bird these were white, in other words, a completely black and white Redstart.

Notes from Mudge's field notes: "It was identical in all black areas to a normal adult male Redstart. The head, throat and upper breast were jet black. As to the