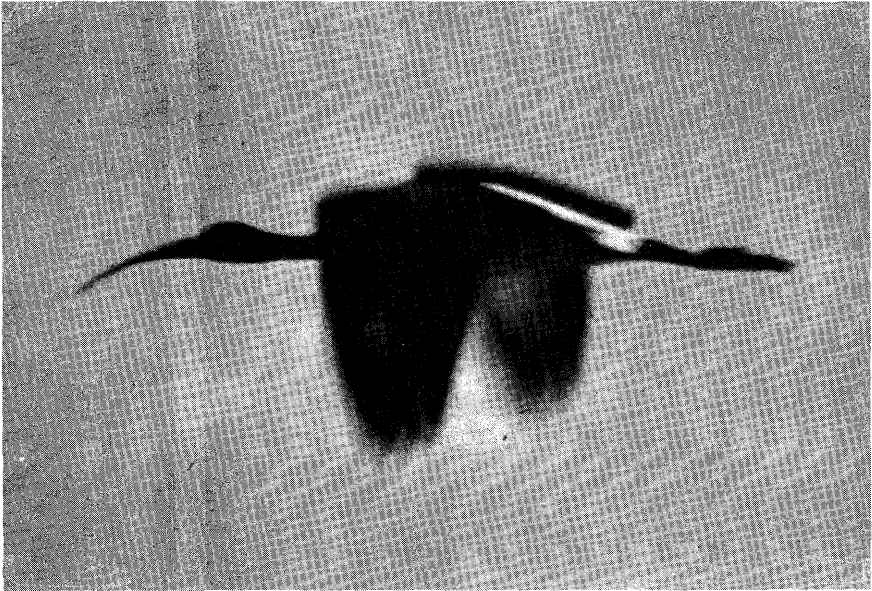


PHOTOGRAPHS OF NEW YORK STATE RARITIES
31. WHITE IBIS

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Immature White Ibis, Sands Point, Nassau Co., N.Y.
July 20, 1977 Thomas H. Davis

The White Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*) is chiefly a Neotropical bird, breeding north to coastal South Carolina, rarely to North Carolina (J. Bull, 1974. *Birds of New York State*. Doubleday/Natural History Press, Garden City, N.Y.). The species has been noted as a wanderer, north to southern Canada and prior to 1977 had been recorded five times in New York State, all from Long Island. Three of the New York records were in the early 1800's, an adult was seen October 25, 1969 at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, Queens Co., and an adult was observed in the company of Snowy Egrets March 29 to early April 1970 at the Oak Beach marsh, Suffolk Co. Another published report of an adult present for "2 days during mid-April" 1970 at Jamaica

Bay Wildlife Refuge lacks substantiation and should be disregarded (see *Kingbird* 20: 158).

In 1977 the species was found nesting in Virginia for the first time (see P. C. Frohring and R. A. Beck, 1978. *American Birds* 32: 126-128). An influx of 2000 immatures into the Battery Island Rookery, Southport, North Carolina in 1968 initiated a northward expansion, and by 1977 1500 pairs of White Ibises were nesting there, with 50 pairs further north near Morehead City. During the 1977 breeding season, adult White Ibises were reported at three Virginia locations but nesting was confirmed only at Fisherman's Island Wildlife Refuge.

Post-breeding dispersal by immature White Ibises was exceptional following the 1977 breeding season. At least one immature reached eastern Massachusetts, and P. A. Buckley *et al.* (*American Birds* 31: 1118) cite the following rough totals for the mid-Atlantic states, all immatures: New York—10, New Jersey—30, Pennsylvania—20, and Delaware—12.

My compilation of New York State White Ibises for 1977 was 11 immatures as follows: July 13-16 Teatown Lake, Westchester Co. (Phil Norman *et al.*); July 19-20 Sands Point, Nassau Co. (Glenn Quinn, Barbara Spencer *et al.*); up to seven birds July 16-August 17 feeding at Mt. Sinai harbor during the day, then flying several miles west to roost at a mixed heron colony at Stony Brook harbor, Suffolk Co. (Julius and Celia Hastings plus dozens of other observers); September 4 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, Queens Co. (M. and H. Hopkins); and September 11 Montauk Point, Suffolk Co. (Jim Ash). The latter bird flew in off the ocean, circled the Point, then disappeared to the west.

Buckley *et al.* (*loc. cit.*) likened the recent pattern of expansion in the White Ibis to that of Glossy Ibis 20 years ago. He suggested that immature participants in 1977's post-breeding dispersal might return as breeding adults to the northern heron colonies which hosted roosting birds. That would be a pleasant prospect to look forward to!

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