

heard but not seen on June 26, 1934 at Gypsumville, and from the identification of a deserted nest with eggs shown to us by Mr. Delgaty of Gypsumville in 1934.—T. M. SHORTT.

UNUSUAL BIRD RECORDS FOR KENT COUNTY, ONTARIO.—BAND-TAILED PIGEON, *Columba fasciata* Say.<sup>1</sup> A single individual was observed at Rondeau Provincial Park on the afternoon of September 6, 1930, and again on the morning of September 7. The bird was watched at the close range of from twenty to thirty feet for an hour or more. It was observed in flight, perching and also feeding on the ground. The bird was also seen by Mr. J. H. Smith, Miss Melba Bates and Mr. W. D. Bates. Mr. Bates was familiar with the species in California. The bird was in excellent plumage. It was checked almost feather by feather and point by point through 8x field glasses at a distance of about twenty feet with the plate of the species in Taverner's *Birds of Western Canada*.

—EASTERN MOCKINGBIRD, *Mimus polyglottos* L. One individual was seen in a garden at Rondeau Provincial Park during the first week of September, 1938. This bird was seen only once.

Another individual was observed in a garden at Chatham, on November 17, 1938, feeding on berries of Evonymus and barberry. It was seen almost every day up to mid-December. A second bird, probably the same individual, was seen in the same garden on February 15, 1939. This individual was seen almost daily at feeding board until April 14. It became quite tame.—DR. C. C. BELL.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Taverner's comments below on the Scarlet Ibis apply equally to the Band-tailed Pigeon—Ed.

THE SCARLET IBIS AND OTHER WADERS AT POINT PELEE NATIONAL PARK—On September 11, 1937, a trip was made to Point Pelee National Park to make arrangements for the forthcoming Federation of Ontario Naturalists field day which was to be held early in October. In examining the marsh area, the snowy egret, *Egretta thula* and the American egret, *Casmerodius albus* were seen in small numbers.

Returning to the marsh on September 13 to give his small daughters the opportunity of seeing the egrets, the writer was surprised to hear

one of them exclaim "Daddy, there is a pink one!" The "pink one" was a scarlet ibis, *Guara rubra* (L). The bird was quite at home in the marsh, in company with the snowy and American egrets and great blue herons. It flew from time to time with apparent ease. Dr. W. E. Saunders was notified by telephone and arrived later in the day with his party to see the bird. The ibis remained in the marsh, at least until October 2. During this interval, it was seen by a large number of bird students from Chatham, London, Hamilton, Toronto and other points.

It was a matter of conjecture how the scarlet ibis arrived at Point Pelee marshes or from whence it came. It may have escaped from a zoo, although no such loss has been reported. Some persons are of the opinion that it may have been brought north by the severe tropical storm that visited the north-eastern coast of the United States earlier in the year.

In any event, the day of its discovery was a notable one as the author had the rare good fortune to have in the field of his glasses a snowy egret, and American egret and a great blue heron at the same instant, while a short distance away around the same small pond was a scarlet ibis and an eastern green heron, *Butorides virescens*, truly a great collection of waders for any location in North America.—GEO. M. STIRRETT.

THE SCARLET IBIS AND OTHER PUZZLING RECORDS.—The Fall of 1937 the ornithological editor received the report of an extraordinary occurrence,—no less than that of a Scarlet Ibis at Point Pelee on the Ontario shore at the west end of Lake Erie. As it is a spectacularly conspicuous bird and the account came with convincing corroborative detail from our well-known and oft-tried ornithologist, W. E. Saunders of London, there could be little doubt as to its accuracy. A report from the original discoverers puts the matter on permanent record in this issue of *The Canadian Field-Naturalist*.

Of course doubt may always remain as to whether it was a natural occurrence or the result of an escape from a zoo or aviary. Inquiry has failed to discover lost Scarlet Ibises from such institutions, which negative evidence however does not rule out that possibility. These questionable intrusives are constantly turning up and will probably occur in increasing numbers as more ornamental or aviary collections are established.

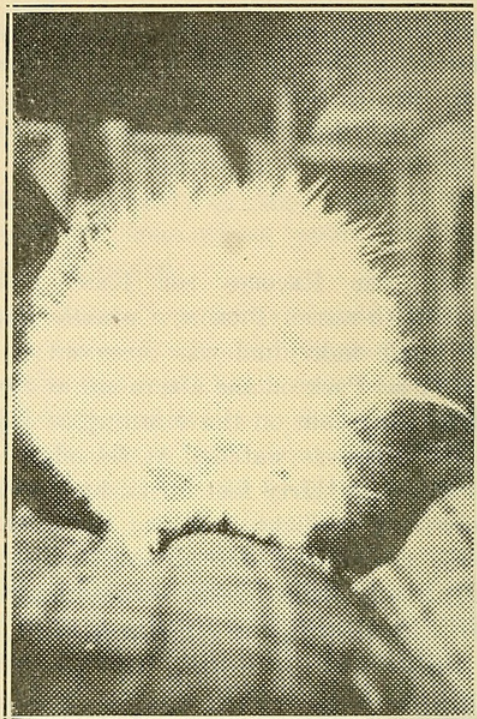


A Red-breasted Goose from James Bay is a case in point. This seemed like a normal feral bird and, had it not been for the leg-band it bore, might have been so regarded. A Gray-breasted Tree Duck from Lac St. Pierre, Quebec is another instance. It bore no label but can scarcely be anything but an escape. A notable instance is an Asiatic Egret in the Provincial Museum of British Columbia, about which considerable dispute arose, and whose status is still the subject of disagreement between local ornithologists.

With such things as Scissor-tailed Flycatchers demonstrated to occur on Hudson Bay, Caracaras at Sault Ste. Marie and Steller's Jay at Quebec, it is rashness to declare that the occurrence of any American (or perhaps European) bird anywhere on the continent is impossible though, short of transport by man, many of them are so improbable as to require irrefutable evidence for acceptance. The Scarlet Ibis is an inhabitant of tropical South America. There are individual records for the southern and Gulf coasts of the United States but none that are above suspicion or have not been seriously questioned. That such a bird should jump clear up to Lake Erie without having been noted as a straggler much nearer home would be most remarkable though theoretically not impossible. P.A.T.

AN ALBINO PORCUPINE (*Erithizon dorsatum*).—An event of interest to North American mammalogy was registered last winter in the southeastern part of the province of Quebec, when a white or albino porcupine was caught alive by Trefflé Giroux, of St. Prosper Dorchester county. This freak animal was a young female about a year old, weighing ten pounds. The capture was made in the woods of St. Gédéon, (Beauce), where Giroux was working at a logging-camp, some 20 miles north of the Maine border. At the moment of discovery, the animal was hiding under a high pile of logs, where apparently he had found food and shelter in one place, gnawing at the bark of the some logs that were walls and roof to him. Giroux had to displace the logs before he had the chance to make a grab at the little beast and bring it to camp, where it was first housed in a wooden box. He finally took it to his father's farm in St. Prosper.

Though they are sometimes found, as well as albino deer, groundhogs, raccoons, squirrels, white porcupines are far from common. Probably no more than a dozen have been recorded in North America, in the last hundred years. Where-



as a large female is now exhibited in the New York Zoological Park, a stuffed specimen is preserved at the Museum of St. Johnsbury, Vermont. It is interesting to mention that the New York specimen gave birth to a black baby, in 1935. In the first decade of this century, the American naturalist George Shiras, 3rd, observed in the middle-west another white female, which was deaf and blind. He trailed her for five or six years, watching her activities in her particular small range, taking notes about her habits and the difficulties of life brought on by her double infirmity. He learned that she was a female of the species when, on a certain day in Spring she appeared accompanied by a black cub. The skin of a white porcupine was also seen by a friend of mine in Nominigue, north of Montreal, a few years ago. All this to recall that albino porcupines are rare, and that the capture made by Giroux is worth more than a mere mention.

This porcupine was captured on the 10th of February 1940. He is snow white from nose to extreme tip of tail. Like all albino specimens, he has pink eyes. This animal is very much alive and healthy. He is neither blind nor deaf, and reacts to any movement or sound in his vicinity. His owner told us that he ate willingly from the first, even in the presence of humans. He has a supply of pine and cedar boughs in his pen, but he also partakes of any vegetable or slice of bread handed in by members of the family. He may not relish captivity, but does not seem to suffer from it. He was the first albino to have been seen in the Beauce district.—HARRY BERNARD.





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