

herony was discovered May 15, 1914, by Miss Nettie M. Sadler, of Syracuse, a teacher of biology and an enthusiastic bird student.

In 1915 Miss Sadler saw the Night Herons several times but they did not nest at Lakeside. In 1916, however, she found them nesting in a swampy wood across the outlet of Onondaga Lake and east of the Oswego canal.

July 21, 1914, 10 P. M., I heard Night Herons "quawking" as they flew around over the streets of Branchport. They seemed to be flying in circles and working to the west, then again in the evening of July 25 a single Night Heron was seen at Branchport by Miss Sadler. April 23, 1916, two Night Herons were seen by Mr. C. F. Stone and myself. They were perched in a tree along the inlet.

My last record for these birds was in the evening of June 18, 1919, when I saw and heard one flying over the streets of Branchport.—VERDI BURTON, *Branchport, N. Y.*

**Bittern Displaying Its White Nuptial Plumes.**—On May 21, 1920, when motoring with my friend, Dr. Lyman F. Bigelow, of Norwood, Mass., we visited a swamp of moderate extent within the town of Westwood, set as a bowl in the midst of woodland and surrounded on three sides by the wooded land on slopes rising well above the level of the swamp, which for the most part was bush-grown and not much open to view. But on the fourth side, where a town road runs beside it, it lay fully open. We had made the circuit of this swamp on foot, observing and enjoying the singing land birds, and were returning on the road to our car when our eyes, turned toward the swamp lying unobstructed before us, observed two pure white patches, not stationary, but moving slowly along among the bushes at the edge of the swamp. Our glasses at once revealed the form of a Bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*) carrying these most conspicuous patches of white at each shoulder, as large as a man's hand but not as long perhaps, being essentially round in form. Occasionally during our observation of the bird, which was continued for twenty minutes or more, these white feathers were raised as a ruff standing out from the natural contour of the bird; at other times they appeared to be more nearly even with the other feathers. These ruffs almost met across the back, but a narrow strip of brown feathers of the back was seen to separate them. To our eyes these ruffs were *pure white*. This conspicuous display of these large white patches was maintained without variation while we remained—different positions which the bird assumed did not materially change them. This Bittern occasionally 'pumped' and occasionally moved at a more rapid pace than the usual slow dignified walk, and at times strutted with the head carried forward. The erect stakelike position was also at times assumed, more especially when we first viewed the bird and it appeared that he was taking notice of our forms on the highway. If he did discern us, it had no effect to dissuade him from



his desire to display himself, for at no time did he withdraw the white ruffs into concealment. Several times for an instant a second Bittern, presumably the female, appeared in view, but only to become hidden at once behind one of the clumps of bushes. On the other hand, the male bird made no use of the bushes to screen himself. The distance travelled by this male bird during our observation was but a few rods, for he moved first in one direction and then in the opposite, first towards us and then away from us, and was only slightly further removed from us when we proceeded on our way, than when we first saw him. Our position had been about a hundred yards distant.

Mr. William Brewster's very interesting detailed description<sup>1</sup> of the display of these white nuptial plumes as witnessed by him and friends in the Great Meadows in Concord in April, 1910, then for the first time observed by him, presents the exhibition quite as we ten years later were fortunate enough to observe it in this Westwood swamp.—HORACE W. WRIGHT, 107 Pinckney St., Boston, Mass.

**The Knot in Montana.**—On October 4, 1915, I found the mummified body of a Knot (*Tringa canutus*) on Woody Island in Lake Bowdoin, Montana (nine miles east of Malta), among remains of a large number of shorebirds and other species that had perished from disease. From the appearance of these bodies it appeared that the birds had died near the end of August or during the early part of September of that same year. All were lying on a muddy shore just above the water line, apparently where they had dragged themselves out of the water after becoming sick. Like the other specimens examined the Knot was not in suitable condition for preservation as a skin, and so was prepared as a skeleton. It is now in the osteological collections of the U. S. National Museum. This is apparently the first published record of the Knot in Montana.—ALEXANDER WETMORE, *Biological Survey, Washington, D. C.*

**Tringa Auct. versus Calidris Anon.**—It has been conclusively shown by Mr. G. M. Mathews (Novit. Zool., XVIII, No. 1, June 17, 1911, pp. 5-6) that the generic name *Tringa* Linnaeus must be transferred to the group commonly called *Helodromas* Kaup. This leaves the Knot, *Tringa canutus* Linnaeus, without a generic name, and Mr. Mathews proposes the use of *Canutus* Brehm (Naturg. Vög. Deutschl., 1831, p. 653; type, *Tringa canutus* Linnaeus). Dr. C. W. Richmond has called attention (Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., LIII, August 16, 1917, pp. 581-582) to a still earlier publication of this name by an anonymous reviewer of Bechstein's Ornithologische Taschenbuch. This name, however, must give way to *Calidris* of the same anonymous reviewer (Allg. Lit.-Zeitung, 1804, II, No. 168, June 8, 1804, col. 542), which has anteriority over *Canutus* and which was introduced as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> 'Auk,' XXVIII, Jan. 1911. Pp. 90-100.



Wright, Horace Winslow. 1920. "Bittern Displaying Its White Nuptial Plumes." *The Auk* 37, 450–451. <https://doi.org/10.2307/4073273>.

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