

Snowy Egret in the Northwest Territories

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On 23 June 1977, a Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*) was seen near Fort Simpson (61°53'N, 121°25'W). This is the first recorded sighting in the Northwest Territories and the most northerly in North America. This species breeds from the central United States through the West Indies and Central America to Chile and Argentina. It is a rare non-breeding wanderer to Alberta, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia (W. E. Godfrey, 1966. *The birds of Canada*. National Museum of Canada Bulletin 203). There are six records of Snowy Egrets in Alberta, all in May and June (C. S. Houston and M. I. Houston, 1976. *American Birds* 29: 74-77; W. R. Salt and J. R. Salt, 1976. *The birds of Alberta*. Hurtig, Edmonton); the most northerly was at Sandy Lake (52°47'N, 111°00'W) in May 1909. The most northerly of four Saskatchewan sightings was at Saskatoon (52°07'N, 106°38'W) on 15 May 1977 (E. M. Serr, 1977. *American Birds* 31: 1013-1016). Near Juneau, Alaska (58°20'N, 134°20'W), a Snowy Egret was observed 18-24 May

1957 (I. N. Gabrielson and F. C. Lincoln, 1959. *The birds of Alaska*. Stackpole Co., Harrisburg, Pa.)

The bird reported here was observed on the downstream (northwest) end of Fort Simpson Island in the Mackenzie River. It was first sighted on 23 June by Richard Quinlan and Yvonne Desilets, who watched it for 45 min from a distance of approximately 50 m. Quinlan, with James Steele and (once) Bruce Reilly, also saw the egret on each of the next 4 d. All observations except the last (1 km downstream on a small island) were at the original location.

A super-8 movie film taken on 25 June was viewed by Henri Ouellet of the National Museum of Natural Sciences, who verified the identification. Bernard Gollop provided a number of additional records from Alberta and Saskatchewan.

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