

Brown Pelican

Jul 1900

9 mi. nw of Boone, Boone Co., IA

Fritcher brothers, DuMont

specimen lost; Henning 1905, Newhouse (let), IBL 61:83

Record Number: 89-AB
Classification: A-D

LETTER

David A. Newhouse to Records Committee, 21 May 1981

REFERENCES

Henning, C. F. 1905. A southern bird in central Iowa. Annals of Iowa 5:62-62.

Anderson 1907

DuMont 1933

Records Committee: IBL 61:83

VOTE: 6 A-D

A-D. Apparently no description of actual observation although great general description of Brown Pelicans are given in various write-ups. However, DuMont would probably have known this species when he saw the specimen at the Boone Library in 1932. Too bad specimen is now lost.

A-D. While we have no description of the bird, there seems to be no question about its Iowa origin. DuMont said he examined it, which is good enough for me.

A-D. Specimen apparently examined by DuMont, but now lost. Although we have no description, I would trust DuMont knew what a Brown Pelican was.

A-D. Henning and DuMont both saw the specimen. Although we have no description or specimen or photo, the circumstances and ease of identification make this record acceptable. The bird is said to have been described in the Boone Standard of July 14, 1900. Could we get this reference? It may describe Brown Pelican rather than this specific bird.

A-D. Henning's well-informed article along with DuMont's having seen the specimen appear enough to confirm record. Problem is lack of direct description of specimen, except for DuMont's note "a fully-plumaged adult." Preponderance of evidence favors record.

89-ab Brown Pelican; Jul 1900; 9 mi. nw of Boone, Boone Co., IA; Fritcher brothers, DuMont; specimen lost.

Henning, C. F. 1905. A southern bird in central Iowa. *Annals of Iowa* 5:62-63.

A SOUTHERN BIRD IN CENTRAL IOWA.

BY CARL FRITZ HENNING.

Last week a Brown Pelican (*Pelicanus fuscus*) was captured by the Fritcher brothers, on the Des Moines river, about nine miles northwest of Boone, Iowa. The young men, Veter and John Fritcher, were taking a ramble along the river that passes within a short distance of their father, S. V. Fritcher's home, when they were suddenly surprised at seeing a large and stately bird—a Brown Pelican—swimming in the bayou. Realizing that the bird was a stranger in these parts, the boys took a snap shot at the pelican with their No. 22 rifle. It flew into a large elm that had at one time been a monarch of the forest, but the elements had broken and splintered the tree and thrown it into the upper branches of another, the branches of the fallen one towering about fifteen feet beyond. This point of vantage gave the bird a good "lookout" position; but wisely concluding the place was untenable while the boys were around, it flew down the river, where it was shortly afterward shot by the young hunters.

The Brown Pelicans are Atlantic coast birds, a tropical and subtropical species, inhabiting exclusively the salt water seas, bays and estuaries, its occurrence inland being purely fortuitous. They occur plentifully in the Bahamas and the West Indies. They rarely come north of North Carolina, and range southward along the Mexican and Central American coast lines. The "American Ornithologists' Union" check list for 1895 refers to the Brown Pelican as accidental in Illinois; but Dr. Robert Ridgway of the Smithsonian Institution in his excellent work, "The Ornithology of Illinois," says the Brown Pelican is barely entitled to a place in the list of Illinois birds, on account of a single specimen having been seen (not taken) by Mr. C. K. Worthen, near Warsaw.

The Brown Pelican has a dark plumage that is considerably variegated. Head mostly white, tinged with yellow on top, the white extending down the neck as a bordering of the pouch and somewhat beyond; rest of the neck dark chestnut. The wings are mostly blackish and the tail is gray. Above, the body is dusky, becoming gray on the wing-coverts, while below it is inclined to be more brown with lateral white stripes. A mixture of yellow, blackish and chestnut feathers are found on the fore part of the neck, low down towards the breast.

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Henning, C. F. 1905. A southern bird in central Iowa. *Annals of Iowa* 5:62-63.
(continued)

The distinguishing feature of the pelican is the great, skinny pouch attached to the entire borders of their very weak lower jaws. This pouch is best developed in the Brown Pelican, where it extends at least half way down the neck in front, is a foot deep when distended and will hold a gallon. The late Dr. Elliott Coues in his "Key to North American Birds," says: "The prevalent impression that the pouch serves to convey live fish, swimming in water, to the little pelicans in the nest, is untrue; the young are fed with partially macerated fish disgorged by the parents from the crop. As Audubon remarks, 'it is doubtful whether a pelican could fly at all with its burden so out of trim.'"

Readers seeking further information concerning the habits of this bird, errant in our region, will find a description in Baird, Brewer and Ridgway's "Water Birds of North America." There is also a reference to it in the "Illinois Ornithologist."—*Boone Standard*, July 14, 1900.

Anderson, R. M. 1907. The birds of Iowa. *Proc. Davenport Acad. Sci.* 11:125-417. p 163.

25. (126). *Pelecanus occidentalis* (Linn.). Brown Pelican.

The Brown Pelican was first recorded from Iowa by Thomas Say (Long's Exp., i, 266), as *Pelecanus fuscus*, from Engineers' Cantonment. The only recent record which I find is that by Carl Fritz Henning ("A Southern Bird in Central Iowa," *Annals of Iowa*, v, 1, April, 1905, 62-3): "Last week a Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus fuscus*) was captured by the Fritcher brothers on the Des Moines River, about nine miles northwest of Boone. . . . first seen swimming in a bayou." This bird was described in detail, also its habitat, in the *Boone Standard*, July 14, 1900.

DuMont, P. A. 1933. A Revised List of the Birds of Iowa. Iowa City: University of Iowa Studies in Natural History, vol. 14, no. 5.

Pelecanus occidentalis occidentalis Linnaeus. Eastern Brown Pelican

Accidental. Anderson (1907) stated that the Brown Pelican was first recorded from Iowa by Thomas Say at Engineer Cantonment. The only other record is one by Carl Fritz Henning (*Annals of Iowa*, V, pp. 62-63) which is as follows: "Last week a Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus fuscus*) was captured by the Fritcher brothers on the Des Moines River, about nine miles northwest of Boone . . . first seen swimming in a bayou." This bird and its habitat were described in some detail in the *Boone Standard*, July 14, 1900.

This specimen, a fully plumaged adult, is now in the Boone Public Library and was examined by the writer June 14, 1932. In the A. O. U. Check-List, 4th Edition, this species is recorded from Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, etc.

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89-AB

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515/281-5145

An EQUAL OPPORTUNITY Agency

Wildlife Research Station
R. R. #1 Boone, IA 50036
21 May 1981

Records Committee
Iowa Ornithologists' Union

Gentlemen:

I have checked the Ericson Library in Boone for the "only brown pelican known to have been seen in Iowa," without success. There is a record enclosed that such a specimen was at one time loaned to the collection by Carl Fritz Henning. Those items listed are no longer at the library museum. The Henning estate and heirs are now widely dispersed, and only anecdotal references to most early writings and possessions can be obtained from living relatives in the area.

Park Ranger Don DeLong (Ft. Defiance State Park, Route 2, Estherville, 51334) at one time contacted these heirs about Henning's Ledges State Park memorabilia; he may know who to contact about this bird.

Interestingly, the Ericson collection still includes Australian white pelican eggs (3), a king(?) rail, a meadowlark (with dyed breast feathers, labeled "robin") and some brown bat. The librarian seems most helpful, and will show the collection by appointment.

I hope this information is of service.

Sincerely,

David A. Newhouse
Nongame Wildlife Research Biologist

SM
cc: 1
encl.

BIRDS AND MAMMALS MOUNTED OR IN PREPARATION:

89-AB

Dr. H.F. BRYANT: gift of glass case and 33 birds-viz;

4 pinnated grouse.	1 Yellow-headed blackbird.
1 Butcher bird.	1 Rose-breasted grosbeak.
2 Bohemian waxwings.	1 Great horned owl.
1 Gold-finch. (American)	2 Screech owls.
3 Canaries, (cage)	1 Brown thrasher.
1 Blue Jay.	1 Spoon-bill duck.
1 Scarlet tanager.	1 Jack snipe.
1 Indigo bird.	1 Bob-white.
1 Red-headed woodpecker.	1 Robin.
1 Orchard oriole.	1 Fox Squirrel.
1 Red-winged black bird.	1 Mole.
1 Yellow warbler.	1 Flying squirrel.
1 Wood duck.	

MR. FRED CORTIS: gift of 3 birds, viz:

Red-tailed hawk.
Sera rail.
American bittern.

MR. E.E. CHANDLER; viz:

1 American rough-legged hawk.

MR. CHARLES LOUGE, viz:

1 Blue jay.
1 kingfisher.
1 Downy woodpecker.
1 Hare (young)

MR. F. WHEELER:

1 Green heron.
1 chipmunk.

MR. BYRON MOXLEY:

1 Silver gray bat.

MRS. JOHN IVIS:

1 Swainson hawk.

MR. F. PHILLIPS:

1 American osprey.

MR. ... HARRIS:

1 Great blue herron.

MR. SAMUEL WORLEY:

1 Pocket gopher.

BIRD AND MAMMALS COLLECTED IN SEASON OF 1905.

by Mr. Carl Fritz Henning:

2 Wood ducks.	1 Oven bird.
1 Least fly-catcher.	1 Downy woodpecker.
1 Morning dove.	1 Killdeer plover and young.
1 King rail.	1 Magnolia warbler.
1 American coot.	1 Sparrow hawk.
1 Rose-breasted grosbeak.	2 Towhee buntings.
1 Red-bellied woodpecker.	2 Meadow larks.
1 Wood thrush.	1 West Maryland yellow-throat.
1 Yellow warbler.	1 Blue bird.
1 Wax-wing, (cedar)	2 Cow birds.
1 Fly-catcher.	1 Scarlet tanager.
1 Red-headed woodpecker.	1 Meadow lark.
1 Brown thrush.	1 Sparrow hawk.
1 Sanderling.	1 Downey woodpecker.
1 Red-bellied nut hatch.	1 Fox sparrow.
2 Blue birds.	1 Indigo bird.
1 Gold finch.	1 Baltimore oriole.
1 Brown thrush.	1 Bob-o-link.

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|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------|
| 1 Yellow-headed blackbird. | 1 Waxwing. (Bohemian) | 89-AB |
| 1 Red-headed blackbird. | 1 Waxwing, (cedar) | |
| 1 Harris' Sparrow. | 1 Meadow lark. | |
| 1 Prarie horned lark-adult. | 1 Golden-winged woodpecker. | |
| 1 Prarie horned lark-young. | 1 Bluebird. | |
| 1 Hairy woodpecker. | 1 Rose-breasted grosbeak. | |
| 1 Pinnated grouse. | 1 Blue jay. | |
| 1 Spoon-billed duck. | 1 Quail. | |
| 1 Robin. | 1 Wilson's snipe. | |
| 1 Yellow-headed blackbird. | 1 Red-winged blackbird. | |
| 1 Rose-breasted broseak. | 1 Red-winged blackbird. (1year) | |
| 2 Yellow canaries, (cage) | 1 Yellow warbler. | |
| 1 Orchard Oriole. | 1 Great northern diver. | |
| 2 Pinnated grouse. | 1 Double-crested cormorant. | |
| 1 American rough-legged hawk. | 1 Peafowl, (male) | |
| 1 Great horned, owl. | 1 pair screech owls (red and grey) | |
| 1 Broad-winged hawk. (with young) | 1 Pinnated grouse. | |
| 1 Wood duck. | 1 Green heron. | |
| 1 Blue jay. | 1 Brown thrush. | |
| 1 American gold finch. | 1 Indigo bird. | |
| 1 Canary (cage.) | 1 Fox sparrow. | |

MR. R.M. WEIR: Santa Cruz, California;

Shelf of 16 South American and Austrilian birds, collected while an officer aboard a U.S. War vessel, cruising in search of the "Alabama" during the civil war, 1861-1865.

Also, by same, numerous curios, carried on same shelf.

LIST OF MAMMALS:

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Flying squirrel. | 1 brown bat. |
| 1 Ground-hog. | 1 chipmunk. |
| 4 Skunks (young) | 1 Flying squirrel. |
| 1 Rat, (common) | 1 Grey squirrel. |
| 1 Meadow mole. | 1 Wolf (Boone Co) |
| 2 Grey squirrels. | 1 Fox squirrel. |
- ALSO: Family of 7 wolves, a red fox, and many birds, that have not been brought from Mr. Henning's work-shop because of lack of cases in the Library to protect them.

THE HENNING COLLECTION OF BIRDS, (PRIVATE) - LOANED.

viz:

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Pied-billed grebe. | Little green heron. |
| Pied-billed grebe. | Sand-piper (snipe) |
| Blue-winged teal. | Ruffed grouse. |
| Ring-necked duck (male.) | Canary (cage) |
| Ring-necked duck (female) | Wilson's phalarope, (male) |
| Little green heron. | Wilson's phalarope, (female) |
| Pigeon. | Crow, (American.) |
| Robin. | Toucan, (South America) |
| Downey woodpecker. | Belted kingfishers. |

Canary (cage)	Red Squirrel. (Minnesota)
Blue jay.	Scarlet tanager.
Green-winged teal, (duck)	Blue jay.
Rocky Mountain Bluebird.	Waxwing, (Cedarbird).
Towhee bunting (male.)	Coot, (American) male.
White-rumped shrike.	Coot, (American) female).
Yellow-headed blackbird.	Marmoset, (Guinea monkey)
Black-capped chickadee.	Sharp-shinned hawk.
Upland plover.	Pileated woodpecker. (woodcock),
Sora rail.	Anna's hummingbird, nest, and eggs. (Cal)
Domestic duck (young.)	Chimney swift.
Hare, American (young.)	Chipmunk.
Teal duck (young)	Great northern diver, (or loon)
Brown thrasher (thrush)	Guinea pig.
Quail (female)	Blue-winged teal (duck.)
Quail (male)	Quail, young.
Quail (female.)	Quail, (male)
Green-winged teal. (duck.)	Mink (with bird in mouth.)
Flying squirrel.	Wolf, prairie, (young)
Pinnated grouse, (Prairie chicken).	2 Grey squirrels.
Pinnated grouse, (male.)	Black squirrel.
Prairie horned lark.	Grey squirrel.
Sand-hill crane.	Meadow mole.
Ring-necked duck.	Pinnated grouse, (prairie chicken)
Musk-rat.	Cornorant, double-crested.
Golden-winged woodpecker.	Parrott (Mexican)
Snowy owl.	Quail, (female bob-white)
Fox squirrel.	Crow.
Short-eared owl.	Crow.
Prairie horned lark.	Rabbitt.
Song sparrow.	Meadow lark.
Virginia rail.	Golden eyed duck. (male)
Widgeon duck.	Golden eyed duck. (female)
Guinea hen.	Great horned owl's family of young.
Great northern diver (loon.)	Spoon-billed duck. (male)
Ground hog, (young)	Hare, American (rabbit.)
Bron pelican - the only one known to have been seen in Iowa. (Habitat.	
Wood duck.	Fox Squirrel.
Wood duck. (female.)	Great northern diver. (loon.)
Rabbits --2 (Continental.)	Green heron.

EGG COLLECTION

In the section of Oology, a fair beginning has been made, by both gift and loans. Such a showing, seems to require considerable case room, which for lack of means, somewhat hinders in rapidly enlarging the collection here. The following are noted:

By CARL FRITZ HENNING * Case containing 175 sets, largely local.
 By W.W. LOOMIS, - Case containing 104 sets, miscellaneous.
 Perhaps an equal number of sets are stored in drawers and other case shelves--some being gifts, other loans.