

Snowy Egret
24 Jul 1934
Elk Lake, Clay Co., IA
Logan Bennett, Gerald Spawn
Bennett 1935, Dinsmore 1981

Record Number: 81-LO
Classification: A-S

SPECIMENS

Iowa State University, #25

PHOTOGRAPH

T. H. Kent, P-0115

NOTE

James J. Dinsmore, 15 Oct 1981

REFERENCES

Bennett, L.J. 1935. Little Blue Herons in Iowa. IBL 5:13.

Dinsmore et al 1984

Records Committee: IBL 64:69

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Tom Kent to Records Committee, 13 Sep 1993

VOTE (1981, for Little Blue Heron): 1-I, 2-V, 3-VI, 1-?

VI, these were Snowy Egrets.

V, Are these the specimens Dinsmore is unsure of?

I, (if specimens exist) (otherwise III?).

V, Specimens not in collection now as I recall.

?, specimens in ISU?

VI, Based on Dinsmore's examination of specimens.

REVOTE (1993): 7 A-S

[no comments]

81-LO

13 September 1993

To: IOU Records Committee

From: Tom Kent

Re: Request for reconsideration of record

Record: 81-LO Little Blue Heron

Reason for request: Jim Dinsmore identified the specimens as Snowy Egrets.

Comment: This one should be reclassified as Snowy Egret A-S. The colors are deteriorated, but I have seen and photographed the specimens and agree with Dinsmore that they are Snowy Egrets. At one time, these specimens were brought to a Records Committee meeting. See Iowa Birds.

Little Blue Heron

Bennett, L. J. 1935. Little Blue Herons in Iowa. Iowa Bird Life 5:13

Little Blue Herons in Iowa.—On July 24, 1934, Gerald Spawn and the writer collected the first specimens taken in Iowa of the Little Blue Heron. Two birds were seen and collected on Elk Lake, Clay County. Both specimens are now in the permanent possession of the Zoology Department of Iowa State College at Ames.—LOGAN J. BENNETT, Des Moines, Iowa.

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
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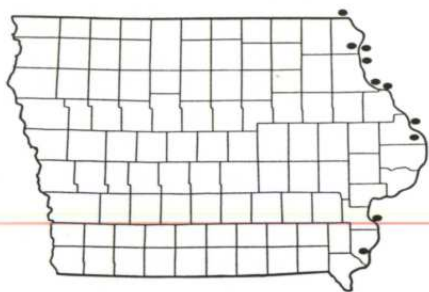
Department of Animal Ecology
124 Sciences Addition II
Telephone 515-294-6148

15 October 1981

I have carefully examined the two skins of white herons that were taken at Elk Lake, Clay County on 24 July 1934 by G. B. Spawn and reported and labelled as Little Blue Herons. I have also brought these skins to several of our records committee/book committee meetings for others to look at. Although there are few good morphological characteristics to go on, I am convinced that these two birds are both Snowy Egrets rather than immature Little Blue Herons. I base this mainly on the presence of some yellow coloring still remaining on the feet but not on the legs of both birds, a good characteristic for the Snowy Egret. Also the shape of the bills is more daggerlike and slightly decurved, a shape which is closer to that of the Snowy than the Little Blue. I have seen hundreds of both of these species in Florida and believe that these shapes, although they are subtle, can separate the two.

See Record
#3

John D. ...



Map 6.11 Great Egret
nesting colonies
in and adjacent to Iowa,
1960-1982.

apparently reoccupied some of their former range (Harlan 1943; Stewart 1949). Currently they persist only at a few small colonies along the Mississippi R. and probably have declined somewhat in numbers.

REFERENCES:

- Anonymous. 1951. Egrets nesting along Missouri River. *Iowa Conserv.* 10:146.
 Harlan, J. R. 1943. An Iowa nesting colony of the American Egret. *Iowa Bird Life* 13:59-62.
 Stewart, C. A. 1949. Observations on the American Egret in Iowa. *Iowa Bird Life* 19:2-5.

Snowy Egret, *Egretta thula*

STATUS: Casual; rare migrant. Class I-S.

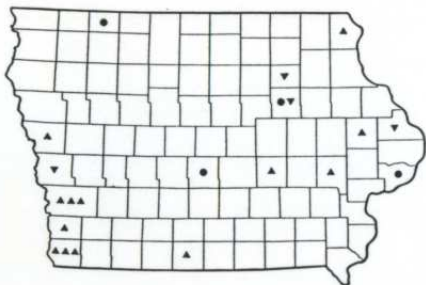
HABITAT: Almost always found near a pond, lake, river, or stream.

SPRING MIGRATION: Most records are from May.

Early dates: 6 Apr 1976 (Lamoni, IBL 46:56)
 18 Apr 1953 (Nahant M., IBL 24:19)
 19 Apr 1975 (Monona Co., *Am. Birds* 29:859)

FALL MIGRATION: There are a few records from Aug and Sep.

Late dates: 13 Sep 1964 (Maquoketa, IBL 34:96)
 30 Aug 1980 (Sweet M., IBL 51:25)
 22 Aug 1980 (Waterloo, IBL 51:25)



Map 6.12 Snowy Egret records,
1960-1982.

COMMENT: Since 1960, there are 21 published records, with scattered earlier records. By months, birds were seen in Apr (5), May (8), Jun (2), Jul(2), Aug (3), and Sep (1). Snowy Egret sightings are scattered from throughout Iowa (Map 6.12), but the 7 records in Apr and May in SW Iowa suggest a regular migration through there. The largest concentration reported in Iowa was 30, seen in Des Moines Co. in Aug 1930 (Holland 1930). It is surprising that more Snowy Egrets are seen in Iowa in spring than in late summer, the time when one would expect postbreeding egrets to appear. Two birds collected and originally identified as Little Blue Herons actually are Snowy Egrets (Bennett 1935). There is no evidence of Snowy Egrets nesting in Iowa.

REFERENCES:

- Bennett, L. J. 1935. Little Blue Herons in Iowa. *Iowa Bird Life* 5:13.
 Holland, H. M. 1930. Snowy Egrets in Des Moines County, Iowa. *Wilson Bull.* 42:289.

Little Blue Heron, *Egretta caerulea*

STATUS: Regular; rare migrant. Class I-P.

HABITAT: Marshes, lakes, and bottomlands along rivers.

SPRING MIGRATION: Most records are from May.

Early dates: 31 Mar 1967 (Iowa City, IBL 37:49)
 6 Apr 1971 (n of Harpers Ferry, Leshner 1971)
 11 Apr 1981 (New Albin, IBL 51:64)
 11 Apr 1982 (L. Manawa, IBL 52:53)

Late dates: 4 Jun 1978 (Forney L., IBL 48:97)
 29 May 1981 (Croton, IBL 51:64)
 28 May 1981 (Des Moines, IBL 51:64)

FALL MIGRATION: Birds start arriving in Iowa in late Jun or early Jul, with most records from Aug.

Early dates: 30 Jun 1973 (Red Rock Res., IBL 43:74)
 7 Jul 1968 (Des Moines, IBL 38:88)
 13 Jul 1966 (Des Moines, IBL 36:81)

Late dates: 11 Oct 1977 (Saylorville Res., IBL 47:143)
 23 Sep 1976 (Brenton's Sl., IBL 46:112)
 12 Sep 1934 (Green Bay, Youngworth 1935)

COMMENT: Although Little Blue Herons were formerly considered rare in Iowa, there have been over 70 sightings since 1960, which suggests an increase in numbers of this species in Iowa (although more extensive observation may account for some of this increase). These sightings, coming from throughout Iowa, are mostly of only 1 bird, rarely as many as 6-8; the only sizable concentration is a report of 125 in Lee Co. in Sep 1934 (Youngworth 1935). The records fall into definite spring and late summer/fall groups. Interestingly, 8 of the 12 spring records in which the age was mentioned were of adults, while 70 of 79 late summer/fall individuals (excluding the 125 reported in 1934) were immatures. There is no evidence that Little Blue Herons have ever nested in Iowa, although they have nested in Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota in recent years. The specimens that were reported taken in Iowa (Bennett 1935) were, in fact, Snowy Egrets. No specimens of this species are available from Iowa, and most records lack descriptive detail. Photos of an adult at Amana L. on 1 May 1982 are on file with the I.O.U. Records Committee.

REFERENCES:

- Bennett, L. J. 1935. Little Blue Herons in Iowa. *Iowa Bird Life* 5:13.

07-18