

Sighted on three previous occasions, June 14, 1968 (one) (Jehl and Smith, 1970: 51), June 19, 1970 (three) and July 2, 1970 (one) (*Blue Jay*, 29:62).

Cliff Swallow

Petrochelidon pyrrhononta

One was observed flying along the Goose Creek Road on June 23, 1971.

One previous record, a bird sighted on June 11, 1970 by Pittaway and J. Rosenband (*Blue Jay* 29: 63).

Winter Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

The distinctive song of this species was heard near the beginning of the Goose Creek Road on June 23, 1971, but it was too windy to record its voice.

An accidental visitor. No previous records are known for the Churchill area. The nearest breeding range according to Godfrey (*The birds of Canada*. Natl. Mus. Can. Bull. 203,

1966) is far to the south in the forested region of southern Manitoba; however, strays have been found as far north as southern Yukon and southern Mackenzie.

Sprague's Pipit *Anthus spragueii*

A male in flight song was seen in the tundra area below the Northern Lights Observatory on June 24, 1971. Its flight song was recorded on tape.

An accidental visitor from the southern prairies — not previously reported for the Churchill region.

Northern Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

A nest with three young was found at the Rocket Range on June 23, 1971.

Jehl and Smith (1970: 65) considered it a "rare summer resident in varying numbers" though fairly common in some years.

FIELD OBSERVATIONS OF POSSIBLE TRUMPETER SWANS NEAR SASKATOON

by **J. B. Gollop**, Canadian Wildlife Service, Saskatoon

On August 29, 1971, I saw a swan on the west side of Goose Lake, about 40 miles southwest of Saskatoon. The bird was studied in full sun for more than 10 minutes until 4:10 p.m. with a 25 x 60 Balscope at a distance of 250-300 yards. The swan spent most of the time preening; it looked around for several minutes and walked about 25 feet before swimming slowly away. The bird was in adult plumage and had a solid black bill except for the pink edge of the posterior half of the mandible. Robbins, Bruun and Zim (1966: 38) state that this mark is diagnostic for Trumpeter Swans (*Olor buccinator*). It is well illustrated in a colour photograph of a Trumpeter in Wetmore (1966:143). The large proportion and pattern of black on the head was also almost identical to the illustration in Robbins *et al.* Kortwright (1942:77) and Delacour (1954:82) write that the pink bill edging is found on the Trumpeter but not on the Whistling Swan (*Olor columbianus*). Banko (1960:66), however, states that he has seen salmon colouring on some

Whistling Swans. "So, for all practical purposes, the salmon color usually present on the dorsal portion of the basal edge of the lower mandible cannot furnish a positive indicator of either species, since overlapping characteristics are commonly observed." (Banko, p. 67). Banko (p. 65) also states "a completely black bill can represent either species"

There were two other reports of swans this summer in the Saskatoon area. On or about August 10, Ewen Coxworth and three companions saw two swans together on the South Saskatchewan River about 9 miles south of the city. On August 22, Geoffrey Galloway and several other canoeists saw a swan near Macpherson Island, within a mile of the August 10 observation. From its call, the latter bird was believed to be a Trumpeter Swan.

These birds may well have been swans from the Cypress Hills wandering northward, a late summer movement characteristic of many species of birds. The arctic-nesting Whistling Swan has not been recorded in the

Saskatoon area prior to September 23.

There is apparently only one previous report of birds that were probably Trumpeter Swans in the Saskatoon area. Sometime between May 12 and 17, 1969, Jim MacPherson, Saskatchewan Department of Natural Resources, saw four swans standing apart from a number of Whistling Swans on Goose Lake. The four appeared to be half as large again as the other swans.

SIGHT RECORD OF SNOWY EGRET NEAR CALGARY, ALBERTA

by **D. Vaughn Weseloh** and **Rod Lazerte**, Department of Biology, University of Calgary, Calgary 44, Alberta.

On the evening of May 20, 1971, while observing Ring-billed and California gulls from a blind in a gull colony near Irricana, Alberta (35 miles NE of Calgary), we observed a Snowy Egret (*Leucophoyx thula*) alight amongst the colony and remain in the immediate vicinity for nearly an hour. At 6:15 p.m. the egret appeared from a southerly direction and landed about 50 yards from our blind on one of the four islands that comprise the gull colony. We observed the egret from the blind with a 20-40 X binocular telescope as well as with 7 X 35 binoculars at distances of 50 - 70 yards and later at about a quarter of a mile.

The egret landed on the fringe of one of the breeding islands and slowly made its way across the width of the densely nested island. It appeared to be foraging as it moved and showed no interaction with either species of nesting gull. During this time the completely white plumage, black legs, yellow feet and lores and hunched stance (as compared to the gulls) were repeatedly seen by both authors. It remained on the breeding island for about half an hour and then flew to and alighted on a long isolated peninsular loafing area on which gulls were already roosting. The egret remained there, preening and loafing, for about 20 minutes and then left the area entirely. A search, led by the junior

- LITERATURE CITED
- Banko, W. E. 1960. The Trumpeter Swan. North American fauna, No. 63. U.S. Dept. Int., Washington. 214 p.
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- Kortwright, F. H. 1942. The ducks, geese and swans of North America. Stackpole, Harrisburg, Pa. 476 p.
- Robbins, C. S., B. Bruun, and H. S. Zim. Birds of North America—a field guide to identification. Golden Press, New York. 340 p.
- Wetmore, A. 1965. Water, prey and game birds of North America. Nat. Geog. Soc., Washington. 464 p.

author, was made of the area two days later but the egret could not be re-located.

The Snowy Egret is nowhere common in Canada. It is regarded only as a rare non-breeding wanderer to Alberta, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland; there are sight records for Ontario, Saskatchewan and British Columbia (Godfrey, W. E., 1966. *The Birds of Canada*, Queen's Printer, Ottawa). In Alberta, two specimens were collected in 1901 and 1910 from the SW and central parts of the province respectively (Salt, W. R. and L. Wilk, 1966. *The Birds of Alberta*. 2nd (Revised) edition. Dept. of Industry and Development). Salt further comments (*in litt.*) that he knows of no other sightings since that time. Tom Sadler (*in litt.*) of Strathmore, however, reports that he and his brother, Ian, observed and photographed a Snowy Egret in June of 1970 approximately 5 miles east of the present sighting.

W. Weber (*Blue Jay*, 29:134-35, Sept. 1971) recently reported the sighting of a Snowy Egret in the Cypress Lake area of Saskatchewan and has summarized the sightings for that province (the majority of which occurred in May-June). It seems apparent that the Snowy Egret is an avid wanderer and should be watched for on the prairies during the late spring-early summer period.