

SNOWY EGRET AT CROOKED LAKE, SASKATCHEWAN

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Over the past five years people in the Crooked Lake area have reported egrets to me along the Qu'Appelle River near Sunset Beach resort. However, I have never followed up these reports until this year.

On 5 May 1978, Milton Criddle of Broadview told me that he had seen an egret on the Qu'Appelle. At 0900 on 7 May, George Anderson and I were travelling along Highway No. 47 when we spotted an egret near the Qu'Appelle River approximately 1.0 km east of Sunset Beach on Crooked Lake. We walked down to the river to get a better look and to try to photograph the bird. We pushed it several times, getting good views through 8x40 binoculars and several pictures with a 35mm camera and telephoto lens. It was not until the bird flew that I was satisfied that this was a Snowy Egret.

The white body, black bill and legs, yellow feet and closed "S" of the neck when flying were the identifying features.³ We then canoed down the Qu'Appelle to try getting closer to the egret and take more pictures. By slowly drifting with the current we were able to get within 50 m of the bird getting excellent views.

There have been a few other sightings of the Snowy Egret in Saskatchewan, but to my knowledge no photographs were obtained. Joyce Gunn saw a Snowy Egret at Spirit Lake, 23-29 May 1956.¹ Mr. E. Cox and Mr. A. Swanston saw Snowy Egrets east of Craven on 9 July 1956.⁵ Wayne Weber saw a Snowy Egret on 19 June 1970 at the Cypress

Lake dam, south of Maple Creek, Saskatchewan.⁵ On 15 May 1977 and 3-4 June 1978, J. B. Gollop and others studied single adults near Saskatoon.^{2 4}

¹ ANAKA, W. 1956. The Snowy Egret. *Blue Jay* 14:89-90.

² O'NEIL, D. P. 1978. Saskatoon birds, May 30-July 26, 1978. *Saskatoon Field Notes* 7(2):1-10.

³ ROBBINS, C. S., B. BRUUN and H. S. ZIM. 1966. *Birds of North America*. Golden Press, New York.

⁴ SERR, E. M. 1977. Northern Great Plains Region, *American Birds* 31:1013-1016.

⁵ WEBER, W. C. 1971. Sight record of a Snowy Egret at Cypress Lake, Saskatchewan. *Blue Jay* 29:134-135.

FURTHER NOTES ON THE ARRIVAL OF THE HOUSE SPARROW

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My article on the spread of the House Sparrow² overlooked two important early reports, from Carberry, Manitoba and Carnduff, Saskatchewan.

Ernest Thompson Seton³ reported that the House Sparrow "first appeared at Carberry in 1892, but was not found in numbers until 1894." This antedates Macoun's 1894 Winnipeg report by two years. By early 1909, Seton said this new arrival was "found in all the settled portions of Manitoba, and at every farmhouse and in all the towns of the North-west as far as Athabaska Landing, Alberta."