

General Field Notes

JAMES F. PARNELL, Department Editor

Department of Biology, University of North Carolina at Wilmington,
Wilmington, N.C. 28401

JULIAN R. HARRISON, Associate Editor

Department of Biology, The College of Charleston, Charleston, S.C. 29401

White Pelican at Carolina Beach, N.C.

KATHARINE A. ALEXANDER

241 Bradley Drive, Wilmington, N.C. 28401

ANN T. NICHOLSON

Route 3, Box 349A, Wilmington, N.C. 28401

MR. AND MRS. W. PAUL GRANT

Route 1, Box 635, Porter's Neck Plantation
Wilmington, N.C. 28401

21 February 1977

About 1645 on 19 February 1977 we watched a White Pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) for a period of 3 to 5 minutes as it flew over the boat basin and lagoon at the north end of Carolina Beach at the end of Sixth Street. First spotted by Nicholson, it was very quickly confirmed by Alexander and then by the Grants. It was considerably larger than the Eastern Brown Pelicans (*Pelecanus occidentalis*), which were diving for food in the same area and also perching on nearby pilings. The large, very yellow throat-pouch was unmistakable as was a less yellow (but very obviously prominent) bill. The bird was almost completely white, exceptions being the wing tips, portions of the head where the bill adjoins, and the back of the head and neck region. Because the sky was overcast and the light conditions poor, it was impossible to get any consensus on the color of its feet and legs.

It should be noted that earlier, unconfirmed sightings of the White Pelican were made in early January near Wrightsville Beach by Mrs. C. Edwin Rowe. Also Kitty Kosh "thought" she saw one but had such a fleeting glimpse that she could not confirm the observation.

The Mute Swan in North Carolina

ELOISE F. POTTER

Route 3, Box 114 AA
Zebulon, N.C. 27597

12 May 1977

The Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*) was introduced and naturalized in New York prior to publication of the 1957 edition of the A.O.U. *Check-list of North American Birds*. In recent years the species has invaded the Chesapeake Bay area where it is now wintering (Am. Birds 29:673) and breeding (Am. Birds 29:955).

In view of the southward extension of breeding range, it seems worthwhile to report three immature Mute Swans seen near the dam at Lake Sagamore, near Bunn in Franklin County, N.C., on 2 December 1975. When first seen, the birds were in their threat posture. Although they were predominantly white, the birds had dingy necks, two of the three had

bills that had not yet begun to turn bright orange, and none of the three had prominent black knobs at the base of the bill.

When I left Lake Sagamore, I asked the security guard if anyone had stocked the lake with swans. He was unaware of their presence. The next day the birds could not be found on the lake. I assume they departed with the other transient waterfowl that had been present on 2 December.

There are several published records of free-flying and apparently wild Mute Swans in North Carolina. Eugene Pond reported three in the bight of Cape Lookout on 16 November 1966 (Chat 31:27). Robert Ruiz and party found one on Lake Julian in Buncombe County on 14 April 1973 (Chat 37:108). Louis Fink noted single fall transients at Rocky Mount in October of 1974 and 1975 (Am. Birds 30:52).

I suggest that the Mute Swan be given hypothetical status on the state bird list until additional records make clear the origin of the birds found in North Carolina.

Goshawk at Shining Rock Wilderness Area, N.C.

MICHAEL TOVE
2133 Buckingham Road
Raleigh, N.C. 27607

5 April 1976

At approximately 0915 on 3 April 1976 I observed an adult Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*) at shining rocks in the Shining Rock Wilderness Area. The bird, first seen rising out of the trees below, flew up along the ridge for some distance before dropping down, out of sight. From above, the bird was slaty blue on its back, wings, and tail. The long tail had several wide bands across its upper side. As the bird rose, several times it flashed a very pale silver or white under surface. The alternating flap and soar combination coupled with long tail and short wings identified the bird as an Accipiter. The silver breast plus very large size eliminates the smaller Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks.

Having spent much time taking hawk counts at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, I am quite familiar with this species. Other field marks aiding in identification include the bird's general behavior. The bird soared more than it flapped, holding the wings flat across the shoulders and dropping the wing tips. The flapping of this bird was powerful and not hurried, and the wings had a tapered appearance. These characteristics are all considered classic for the species. It is also interesting to note that the bird came out of a heavy spruce and hemlock forested area, the Goshawk's traditional breeding habitat.

Franklin's Gull at Huntington Beach State Park, S.C.

BOB AND LISA LEWIS
308 E. Creswell Avenue
Greenwood, S.C. 29646

20 April 1977

On the afternoon of 26 September 1976, we were birding at Huntington Beach State Park, Georgetown County, S.C. Near Murrell's Inlet at the northern end of the park, we found a flock of at least 300 birds resting on the beach. The majority of these were Laughing Gulls and Royal Terns, but also present were American Oystercatchers; Black Skimmers; Forster's, Common, and Sandwich Terns; and Herring and Ring-billed Gulls. While scanning the flock with a 30X Balscope from a distance of about 150 feet, we noticed in the midst of some Laughing Gulls one bird that immediately stood out from the rest and appeared to be a Franklin's Gull (*Larus pipixcan*).

The bird was noticeably smaller than the Laughing Gulls, and its head pattern was strikingly different. The remnant of the black hood was more extensive, especially around the eye and on the nape; a distinct eye ring was also noted. The bill was black and roughly of the same proportions as that of the Laughing Gulls, but heavier than that of a Bonaparte's. A row of small diamond-shaped marks was present in the distal portion of the folded wing, contrasting with the black background of the wingtips except for their very ends which were white. There was not as much white, however, as we have seen in some illustrations of Franklin's Gull in breeding plumage. The mantle was at least as dark a gray