

White Ibis near Rosman, N.C.

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23 September 1977

On 21 August 1977 I was leading a canoe trip down the French Broad River from Rosman to US 276 at Brevard, Transylvania County, N.C. We had been on the river about an hour and had already spotted several Green Herons and Belted Kingfishers when we saw an immature White Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*) on the north bank of the river at a distance of about 15 meters. It was perched about 3 meters off the ground in a dead snag. Even without binoculars, the profile was unmistakable. The long decurved bill, the dark brown body showing a clear separation with the lighter neck, and the large size (about 45 cm high) were clearly visible. The bird did not fly at seeing us and seemed unusually unconcerned about our presence. I watched the bird for over a minute while I stopped paddling and let the river current take us by. Several other canoeists saw the bird, but none were familiar enough with birds to give it a name. The river level was lower than normal as a result of the dry summer.

[NOTE: See related article below.—JFP]

White Ibis in Transylvania County, N.C.

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9 September 1978

On 3 August 1978 an immature White Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*) was discovered by George Letchworth at Cedar Mountain in Transylvania County, N.C. The bird was first observed on a golf course at an elevation of about 2800 feet. The bird was seen by numerous people until 15 August. Photographs were secured by Mabel Boulet. Studied closely on several occasions, the bird had a long, faintly pink, decurved bill, a gray neck, white underparts and rump, and a dark humped body.

[NOTE: Observations of immature White Ibis are increasing in the North Carolina mountains. This apparently relates to the increasing success of the breeding colonies at Battery Island in southeastern North Carolina and at various places in coastal South Carolina. A continued increase in the number of White Ibis that wander inland in late summer can be expected as long as the coastal colonies thrive.—JFP]

Harlequin Duck on Bull's Island, S.C.

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30 August 1977

On 6 March 1977 we observed an immature male Harlequin Duck (*Histrionicus histrionicus*) within a few feet of the shore along the north beach of Bull's Island, Charleston County, S.C. We were so close to the bird that its body more than filled the field of view at 80X on our telescope. We observed the bird for about 10 minutes. This occurred in the afternoon, under heavily overcast skies.

The bird appeared to be in molt. The head showed all the requisite stripes and patches, but they seemed indistinct, or perhaps worn. An exception to this was the white ear patch, which had very precise borders. Two chestnut patches were prominently displayed in the crown stripes. On the body, the large vertical white stripe on the side was present, as was the horizontal white stripe leading from the bend-of-wing area around to the front of the breast. The long white scapular stripe of the adult male plumage was not visible, however, nor was the chestnut-colored flank patch. Instead, these last two regions, along with the back and mantle, appeared black. These plumage characteristics are con-

sistent with the description in Roberts' *Birds of Minnesota* of the first-winter male plumage.

There are only four published records of the Harlequin Duck in South Carolina. This species was first noted in the state by Arthur T. Wayne (*South Carolina Bird Life*, 1970, p. 139; *Auk* 35:437) who observed a total of six birds (all females or immature males) at Porcher's Bluff near Mt. Pleasant on 14 and 16 January 1917. *South Carolina Bird Life* also mentions two males and a female sighted in the Cape Romain Refuge on 1 February 1936. More recently, a male and a female were seen near McClellanville on 21 December 1975 (Chat 40:2), and four birds (sexes not given) were discovered at Lake Hartwell near Madison on 8 March 1977 (Chat 41:98).

[NOTE: On 27 December 1976 Paul Gurn and several members of the Mattatuck Community College (Connecticut) Natural History Club observed an immature male Harlequin Duck at the northeastern end of Bull's Island. This previously unpublished record may represent the same bird reported above.—JRH]

A Record of the Hudsonian Godwit in South Carolina and a Comparison with the Black-tailed Godwit

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22 February 1978

In the afternoon of 4 September 1977, my wife Lisa and I were birding along the north beach of Huntington Beach State Park, Georgetown County, South Carolina. We had been seeing the expected species of shorebirds when one of us spotted a pair of larger birds about 100 yards away. We studied them for the next 10 minutes through our 80X telescope.

The birds resembled Marbled Godwits (*Limosa fedoa*) in general morphology: long legs, upright posture, and a long, two-toned recurved bill. However, the bills were shorter in proportion to the body than in the Marbled Godwit, and were decidedly curved throughout their length. The plumage of the breast, belly, and flanks was pure white on both birds, except that one bird had three small, faded, reddish patches on its breast and belly. No "marbling" effect was visible. Also, these birds were slimmer and perhaps a bit smaller than Marbled Godwits. We immediately suspected they were Hudsonian Godwits (*L. haemastica*), a species we are familiar with in New York.

We approached in order to flush the birds, and observed the black and white tail pattern. Unfortunately, we did not observe the black axillars because of the angle the birds presented as they flew away. Also, the light was merely adequate because of a heavy overcast. However, we did note a thin, indistinct wing stripe on both birds. They flew north across Murrell's Inlet and did not return.

There are but three published records of the Hudsonian Godwit in South Carolina. A single bird, observed carefully by E. von S. Dingle near Charleston in early May of 1941, was regarded by Sprunt and Chamberlain (*South Carolina Bird Life*, 1970, p. 251) as the first definite record for the state. In the Supplement to the latter source (op. cit., p. 640-641), Burton places the species on the hypothetical list and gives a second record, an amazing 49 birds observed by the Tedards at Hunting Island, Beaufort County, on 1 September 1961 (Chat 26:41). This flock was associated with a large concentration of shorebirds, including several Marbled Godwits. The third record is represented by a single individual seen by Perry Nugent at Moore's Landing, Charleston County, on 25 February 1973 (Chat 37:53); no details are provided. In Georgia, there are records of this species from Little St. Simons Island (*Oriole* 33:18) and Sapelo Island (*American Birds* 27:602; *Oriole* 38:1-5). In recent years a few have been seen each fall on the Outer Banks of North Carolina (Chat 40:49; 41:54).

Because we did not see the black axillars, the possibility that the birds were Black-tailed Godwits (*L. limosa*) must be considered. This species breeds in the Palearctic and