

Partial Albino American Goldfinch on Johns Island, South Carolina

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750 Copperhead Trail, Johns Island, SC 29455

In mid-January 2003, a partial albino American Goldfinch (*Carduelis tristis*) was observed at a sunflower feeder on Johns Island, Charleston County, SC. The bird's wing and tail plumage appeared normal, but the rest of the bird was almost pure white except for a faint wash of yellow on the throat and face. Both the legs and bill were very pale.



Partial Albino American Goldfinch

The bird, part of a small flock of normal winter plumage goldfinches, was observed almost daily from a distance of about 20 feet, but disappeared after two weeks. It appeared to behave normally and was not harassed by other members of the flock.

According to Terres (1980), albinism, in its various degrees, occurs in less than one percent of wild avian species. It is more common in birds with dark plumage, such as brown and black, and much less common in birds with light colored plumage such as goldfinches.

Literature Cited

Terres, J. K. 1980. The Audubon Society Encyclopedia of North American Birds. Alfred A. Knopf. New York.