

## LITERATURE CITED

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### A SUCCESSFUL NESTING OF THE REDDISH EGRET (DICHROMANASSA RUFESCENS) ON CAT ISLAND, ALABAMA

John Dindo and Ken Marion

The Reddish Egret (Dichromanassa rufescens) is a transient along the Alabama Gulf coast. Breeding occurs from lower California, coastal Texas, and Florida, followed by migration along the Gulf coast (Imhof, 1976). Probable nesting of the Reddish Egret in Alabama has been reported only once. This record was by W. M. Gaillard in 1965 on Cat Island (Imhof, 1976). In an ongoing study being conducted on Cat Island (a 5.2 ha island located 11 km north of Dauphin Island in Mississippi Sound), Reddish Egrets began to appear shortly after the first arrival of Snowy Egrets (Egretta thula), and tricolored Herons (Hydranassa tricolor) on 28 March 1985. The latter 2 species quickly established nest sites and nest building activity was underway by 4 April. Three pairs of Reddish Egrets also started nest building on 25 April. Nests were constructed in the upper branches of a dense stand of marsh elder (Iva frutescens), approximately 1.2 m off the ground. Upon examination two weeks later, only 2 pairs had successfully established nests, with 4 eggs in one nest and 2 in the other. The nests were tagged and followed throughout the study, along with nests of other species in the colony. Only 1 of the 2 Reddish Egret nests was successful, with 2 birds being fledged. The other nest site was destroyed during early incubation and

reestablishment of another nest by that pair was not observed. Three adults and 2 fledglings were seen on the nest site or near the water's edge on all subsequent trips to Cat Island until the arrival of Hurricane Elena on 30 August 1985. On 2 successive trips to Cat Island (3 and 4 September), no herons or egrets were seen. During the weeks following the hurricane, there were no further sightings of Reddish Egrets. It is believed that the birds blew inland or to the west with the approaching storm.

#### LITERATURE CITED

Imhof, T. A. 1976. Alabama Birds, 2nd ed.. University of Alabama Press, University, AL.

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#### REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

As part of a species restoration project in north Alabama, 66 great white egrets were "hacked" near Guntersville Reservoir this summer. Fledglings were marked with 2-inch long red flags attached to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service bands on the right leg. Sightings should be reported to:

Burline Pullin  
Wildlife Resources Development Program  
Tennessee Valley Authority  
Norris, Tennessee 37828  
Telephone: 615-494-9800

Please note number and location of egrets and the date of observations.