

NOTES

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PEACH-COLORED CATTLE EGRETS (*BUBULCUS IBIS*) IN SOUTHERN FLORIDA

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The rich orange-buff ("peach") coloration of Cattle Egrets in high breeding plumage is normally restricted to the crown, lower throat and mantle (Cramp and Simmons 1977). In April 1995 we observed three completely peach-colored individuals in southern Florida. We saw the first bird on 10 April, foraging with the Cattle Egret flock in the Flamingo campground, Everglades N.P. in the early afternoon, and flying to roost on the island in Eco Pond, again with the flock, in the early evening. What was presumably the same bird had been reported to us on 2 April, but we did not see it again on subsequent visits to Flamingo, April-July 1995. On 22 April, TB saw two similar birds, again with small flocks, along the US 27 south of Lake Okeechobee and west of South Bay. All three individuals were identical to normal breeding plumage adults except for their rich peach color. It is unclear whether this plumage, presumably caused by an excess of yellow and red pigmentation, is genetically controlled or a result of diet or disease. Although the Asian *B. i. coromandus* "differs from nominate *ibis* in buff colour on head spreading to cheeks and throat, ornamental feathers more golden . . ." (Cramp and Simmons 1977), we can find no previous report of entirely peach-colored Cattle Egrets in the literature. However, O. L. Bass (pers. comm. 1995) reports having seen about five such individuals in southern Florida over the last 20 years.

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LITERATURE CITED

CRAMP, S., AND K. E. L. SIMMONS. 1977. The Birds of the Western Palearctic. Vol. 1. Oxford Univ. Press, Oxford.