

PA Rare Bird Report

Submission Date	2013-05-02 23:02:18
Observer's Name	Bill Etter
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Phone	6107378554
Observer's Address	Street Address: 407 S Cigar Rd City: Northampton State / Province: United States Postal / Zip Code: 18067 Country: United States
Species (Common Name)	Cattle Egret
Species (Scientific Name)	Bubulcus ibis
Number of individuals	1
Age(s) and Plumage(s) and Sex (if known)	Adult
Observation Date and Time	05-01-2013 10:30 AM
Did you submit this sighting to eBird?	Yes
Link to eBird checklist	http://ebird.org/ebird/pa/view/checklist?subID=S13960380
County	Northampton
Location (City, Borough, Township)	Lower Nazareth Twp
Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road)	Gremer Road ponds
GPS coordinates of sighting	40.748052,-75.338326
Habitat	Ponds surrounded by reeds...area is fairly rural, but a housing development is going up right behind the ponds. This location has a long history of producing good waders, waterfowl and shorebirds.
Distance to bird	Closest about 50 yards; pics taken from much further away...up to 200+ yards
Viewing conditions	Beautiful clear day
Optical equipment used	10x32 Celestron bins
Description	I was told this bird was present, so I went over to check it out. Identification was cut and dry. bird was a small, white

egret with orange plumes around the head and throat. Legs and bill were completely orange/yellow. Wings and primaries were bright white.

Behavior (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing)

When I first relocated it, the Cattle Egret was walking up out of the reeds surrounding the smaller of the two ponds. It walked around in the grass a bit, then flew about 100 yards to the edge of the larger pond. From this point, it stalked the edge of the pond for a while, actively feeding. It seemed to catch a few prey items, then caught what appeared to be a small bullfrog. At this point, it struggled with the frog for a minute, then flew off with it to the far side of the pond.

Separation from similar species (How you eliminated others)

Orange plumes on head, neck and back eliminate all other small white herons. Furthermore, bright yellow leg color eliminates several other species (i.e. Great Egret, Snowy Egret, most Little Blue Herons, and Little Egret, which would be very unlikely to begin with...). Little Blue Heron is further eliminated by pure white wings and primaries. This was an easy identification.

Discussion – anything else relevant to the observation that will aid the committee in evaluating it:

Regarding the two attached photos: these were taken from a good distance with zoom almost totally extended. They are very washed out...orange plumes are not apparent, but I think the pics convey a good sense of size and proportion. Color of the legs, feet and primaries are also evident to some extent. #28 shows orange on the crown a bit if you zoom in.

Regarding previous experience with the species: while this is only the second Cattle Egret I recall seeing in PA, I've seen hundreds to thousands in states further south, from Delaware to Florida, as well as in the West Indies.

Are you positive of your identification ? (Why or why not)

100% positive

During

None

After

None

Supporting evidence (check all that apply)

Photograph

Upload images, audio, video or drawings

[031.JPG](#)
[CattleEgret028.jpg](#)

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