

---

January 1977

## Fourth Record of the Arctic Loon from Florida

Florida Field Naturalist

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/ffn>

---

### Recommended Citation

Florida Field Naturalist (1977) "Fourth Record of the Arctic Loon from Florida," *Florida Field Naturalist*. Vol. 5 : Iss. 1 , Article 4.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/ffn/vol5/iss1/4>

This Field Notes is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. It has been accepted for inclusion in Florida Field Naturalist by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@usf.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@usf.edu).

## FIELD NOTES

**Fourth record of the Arctic Loon from Florida.** — On 12 April 1976 a sick loon found on the Gulf shore at Indian Rocks Beach, Pinellas County, Florida, was taken to the Suncoast Seabird Sanctuary. It was identified as an Arctic Loon (*Gavia arctica*) by Marie Hughes, and after its death the same day frozen by Ralph Heath, Director. In August, Hopkins learned of the existence of the bird and brought it to Woolfenden who corroborated the identification and prepared it as a study skin (G. E. W. 5024) now housed at the University of South Florida.

Only 3 previous records of the Arctic Loon exist for Florida (Kittleson 1976, Fla. Field Nat. 4: 17). These include two specimens from the Gulf side of Florida, one of which was a dead bird found in April. The Arctic Loon is difficult to distinguish in the field from the Common Loon (*G. immer*), which is common along the east shore of the Gulf of Mexico in winter and during migration. Though certainly rare, the Arctic Loon may be more regular in the Gulf than presently realized. If true, this suggests that some individuals fly overland to and from central and western Canada, a fact as yet unestablished (Palmer 1962, Handbook of North American birds, Vol 1; De Sante 1976, Amer. Birds 30: 685).

The specimen, a male (testes 6 × 2 mm), weighed 1.5 kg and had no fat. Measurements critical for species identification include bill from feathers 56 mm and tarsus 76 mm. The bird was undergoing simultaneous wing molt, with all primaries new and short enough that their greater underwing coverts extend beyond them. A few new feathers of the Definitive Alternate or Alternate II plumage are scattered over the back and mantle. — Larry Hopkins, 538 Garland Street N., St. Petersburg, Florida 33703 and Glen E. Woolfenden, Department of Biology, University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida 33620.

**Second Florida breeding record of the Ruddy Duck.** — On 29 May 1976 we discovered 5 Ruddy Ducks (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) in water at the bottom of a deep, abandoned rock quarry about 3 km N of Live Oak, Columbia County, Florida, at the junction of highways U. S. 29 and I-10. As we studied the ducks we realized the group included 2 birds in the typical alternate plumage of the male and 3 in female plumage. We noted that 2 of the latter were scarcely two thirds the size of the remaining ducks and of nearby American Coots (*Fulica americana*). They also differed slightly in color from the presumed adult female Ruddy Duck.