

# Little Blue Heron a rare bird indeed

A rare bird indeed visited the Comox Valley recently.

An immature Little Blue Heron (*Egretta Caerulea*) was observed Saturday, Sept. 18 by **Margaret Clayton** and **Isabelle McLeish** along the Courtenay River adjacent to the old sewage lagoon.

It was identified as a Little Blue Heron by **Doug and Marion Innis, Walter Fitzpatrick, Fr. Charles Brandt, and Dr. Jim and Betty Lunam.**

This bird of the eastern seaboard of the United States is an extremely rare visitor to the west coast, and is considered accidental, i.e. very, very rarely occurring.

Unlike the adult, the immature bird is perfectly white with greyish wing tips, dull olive legs and with the pale bluish bill tipped with black.

In his *Birds of British Columbia*, **Wayne Campbell** reports the bird having been seen and photographed at Judson Lake near Abbotsford in 1974 and again in 1975.

Its occurrence in the Pacific Northwest is part of the bird's post-breeding dispersal and could very well coincide with the warming trend caused by the Greenhouse Effect or El Nino current.

Father Charles Brandt captured the bird on 35 mm film as well as on video and he also recorded its voice, which he said was a "nondescript squawk."



Rare Little Blue Heron observed in Courtenay