

Grauwe vliegenvanger	53	(7)	Kauw	75	(24)
Bonte vliegenvanger	144	(2)	Ekster	19	(3)
Kuifleeuwerik	18	(1)	Vlaamse gaai	4	(1)
Boomleeuwerik	17	(5)	Spreeuw	4304	(111)
Veldleeuwerik	60	(7)	Wielewaal	15	(1)
Strandleeuwerik	13		Vink	4018	(417)
Grote pieper	1	(1)	Keep	977	(31)
Boompieper	32	(3)	Putter	109	(25)
Graspieper	49	(22)	Sijs	1217	(193)
Pieper (spec.)		(1)	Frater	17	
Gele kwikstaart	32	(1)	Barmsijs	10	(7)
Grote gele kwikstaart	10		Kleine barsijs	9	(2)
Witte kwikstaart	67	(7)	Kneu	805	(291)
Kwikstaart (spec.)	1		Huismus	25	
Pestvogel	1		Ringmus	298	(14)
Grauwe klauwier	30	(5)	Midden Eur. kanarie	7	(1)
Baardmannetje	13		Goudvink	23	(1)
Koolmees	635	(73)	Groenling	1054	(220)
Pimpelmees	82	(185)	Geelgors	139	(23)
Zwarte mees	3		Ortolaan	1	
Matkopmees	2		Rietgors	149	(16)
Zwartkopmees (spec.)	13		Onbekend	92	(32)
Staartmees	27		<i>Cheimonormis p. palu-</i>		
Boomkruiper	2		<i>dicola</i>	6	
Boomklever	7		<i>Neophedina c. cincta</i>	1	
Goudhaantje	3	(1)	<i>Merops apiaster</i>	5	
Bonte kraai	1		<i>Zosterops c. capensis</i>	1	
Zwarte kraai	17	(9)			
Roek	413	(2)	Totaal	22096	(2554)

Three recent cases of melanism in the Black-headed Gull, *Larus ridibundus* (L.)

by

A. L. J. VAN IJZENDOORN

(Met een nederlandse samenvatting: Drie melanistische kokmeeuwen)

On 29 January 1944 I was bicycling along the coast of the IJsselmeer (the former Zuiderzee) some 4 kilometers S. of Hoorn, Holland, near the village of Scharwoude, when my attention was drawn to a peculiar bird, with a color-arrangement never seen by me before.

The bird was walking in a wet, low-lying meadow and it did not have any companions.

I could approach the bird to about a 10 meters' distance and soon found out that it could only be a melanistically colored Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus* (L.)).

I could study the details of its plumage for over a quarter of an hour with the aid of 8-times magnifying binoculars.

The gull was on the whole very dark brown and some parts of the plumage were even close to black. The underparts showed an

intensification of color from chin to tail: chin and throat being rather dark greyish, while this color was changed to a dull brownish black on the belly, the breast being of an intermediate shade of brown.

The crown and nape were blue-grey, intermixed with darker, brownish streaks; the sides of neck and head were dirty-white, with the characteristic dark-brownish patch on the hinder ear-coverts. The color of the underwing was again very dark, nearly black, with a brown hue. The upper wing-feathers had a lead-grey color, but were very much darker than in normal Black-headed Gulls, which were present for comparison on the same meadow, together with approximately 1000 Common Gulls (*Larus canus* L.).

The white margins to the front of the wings, nearly from the carpal joint to the wing-tips, so typical of a Black-headed Gull's wing-pattern, were very conspicuous. There was a black edge, hardly visible, on the hinder border of the wing. Near the carpal joint there was a dark-brown patch on the upper wing-coverts. The feathers of the back were dark greyish. The upper tail coverts were again extremely dark, they seemed to be nearly sooty black. The tail, however, was contrastingly pure white. The legs proved to be very dark red and so was the bill, which had a black tip. The color of the irides was not observed. Posture, build, behavior, and some of the characteristics mentioned above proved the bird to be an aberrantly colored Black-headed Gull.

It did not at all associate with its normally-colored companions, but walked in the meadow quite solitarily, successfully catching worms by means of that innate mode of feeding: trampling with its webbed feet on the wet ground thus inducing the worms to come to the surface, only to be snatched up at once by the gull.

There are two other recent records of melanistic Black-headed Gulls, observed in the Netherlands, viz.: 8 and 11 March 1941, one at Rilland Bath and 14 April 1946 one at Herwen en Aerdt. Though the descriptions of the three melanistic Black-headed Gulls show several dissimilarities in plumage-color, yet I think it to be remarkable that the general distribution of the dark (brownish and blackish) areas seems to be the same.

So I wonder whether the bird seen in 1941, 1944 and 1946 could be the same individual. Certainly a Black-headed Gull seen in 1941 has not yet reached its age-limit in 1946. The minor differences in the description might either be due to successive changes in the plumage-colors, or — at least partly — to the subjectiveness inherent to any description and observation of colors in the field. These three cases of evident melanism are strange indeed, as it is especially the pure white parts of the plumage (breast and belly) that have conspicuously changed color. Where normally eumelanin is totally absent, in the white and normally pigmentless tracts,

exactly in these places the eumelanin-pigments seem to have been amassed in large numbers.

The greyish parts of these gulls' plumages, where the eumelanin does occur, showed less darkening of color, thus justifying the opinion that a far lesser amount of eumelanin had come to development in these tracts, though an increase of the quantity of eumelanin might first of all be expected there.

Though melanism in birds is not of very rare occurrence, yet we know but little about the nature and the cause of these interesting aberrations.

Literature.

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Nederlandse samenvatting: *Drie melanistische kokmeeuwen (Larus ridibundus (L.))*.

In 1941 zag VAN LYNDEN 1 melanistische kokmeeuw te Rilland Bath, Zuid-Beveland, op 8 en 11 Maart; in 1944 zag de schrijver 1 melanistische kokmeeuw te Scharwoude, op 29 Januari; in 1946 namen DE GRAAF c.s. een melanistische kokmeeuw waar te Herwen en Aerd, op 14 April.

Betreffen deze waarnemingen hetzelfde individu? De kleurverdeling, die over het geheel genomen hetzelfde schijnt volgens de beschrijvingen, wijst hier wellicht op. Het tijdsverschil hoeft geen bezwaar te zijn, evenmin het plaatsverschil.

Merkwaardig is, dat juist de witte, normaal pigmentloze vedergedeelten bij alle drie waargenomen vogels het donkerst gekleurd bleken te zijn, terwijl de grijze gedeelten van het verenkleed, die ook normaal eumelanine bevatten, naar verhouding veel lichter van tint bleken.

Hoorn, 27 December 1949.

Waarnemingen bij voedsel zoekende watervogels en varanen

door

A. HOOGERWERF

(met 2 tekstfiguren)¹⁾

In het wildreservaat Oedjoeng-Koelon, het schiereiland aan de uiterste Zuidwestpunt van Java, had ik meermalen gelegenheid varanen (*Varanus salvator*) en verschillende reiger- en ooievaarachtige vogels tijdens het gemeenschappelijk fourageren te bekijken. Daarbij heb ik herhaaldelijk kunnen waarnemen, dat de kleinere reigersoorten zoals *Egretta intermedia*, *Egretta garzetta* en *Egret-*

¹⁾ Het was mogelijk deze illustraties op te nemen „buiten bezwaar” van de Clubkas. (Red.).