

# Cattle Egret

*Bubulcus Ibis* (Linnaeus)

Order: Pelecaniformes

Family: Ardeidae

Genus: Bubulcus

Species: Ibis



## STATUS

Resident/ Common

## MORPHOLOGY

- Size the same as of the Little Egret.
- Field Characters : A snow-white lanky bird, very similar in non-breeding plumage to the Little Egret, but recognisable by the, colour of its bill which is yellow not black. In the breeding season it acquires delicate golden-buff hair- like plumes on head, neck, and back. Sexes alike. Gregarious. Usually attending grazing cattle. Not necessarily near water.

## DISTRIBUTION

- Africa and the southern, warmer parts of Europe and Asia. The race coromandus is found throughout India, Burma and Ceylon. Beyond— eastward—it extends to Korea.

## HABITS

- The Cattle Egret is less dependent on the neighbourhood of water than are most of its family. It is met with gregariously on grass- and pasture-land both on the margins of tanks and jheels as well as further inland.

## NESTING

- Cattle egrets have regular roosts in favorite trees to which they resort every evening. Nesting season, depending on the monsoons, is mainly June to August in N. India; November/December in the south.
- The birds breed in colonies usually in company with Paddy Birds and sometimes also with Darters, cormorants and herons. The nest is of the usual crow pattern—an untidy structure of twigs. It is built in trees not necessarily near water and often in the midst of a noisy bazaar in a town or village.
- Three to 5 eggs form the normal clutch. They are a pale skim-milk blue in colour.