

ciation between resident giant Canada Geese and domestic greylag geese would increase the opportunity for such pair formation.

I also would caution observers from routinely identifying the subspecies of Canada Geese in the field. The taxonomy of this species is quite complex and differences in size are difficult to determine in the field. An excellent discussion of this problem may be found in Moser and Rolley (1990). Although the giant is the largest of the subspecies, there is some overlap in morphological measurements between two races (i.e., Todd's and giant). Moser and Rolley (1990) could identify subspecies with a high degree of accuracy by using morphology measurements and a complicated discriminate function analysis statistical procedure.

While censusing and banding Canada Geese during the breeding and fall migratory periods in north-eastern Illinois over the past twenty years, I have observed, nearly annually, geese similar in appearance to the Brookfield goose Ms. Bent reports. In addition, I have observed free-flying domestic greylag geese associating with resident Canada Geese. Based upon behaviors observed, (i.e., defense of a territory, pair greeting, and triumph ceremonies: Johnsgard 1965, Collians and Jahn 1950), I have several times found mixed pairs of these two species in-

cluding one pair associated with a brood of nearly fledged young. Members of this brood resembled the individual pictured in this article. My most recent observation of geese resembling the goose pictured in Ms. Bent's article were two individuals at Fermi National Accelerator Laboratories near Warrenville, Illinois, in early November 1995. These individuals, or similar appearing birds,

have been observed at Fermi on several different occasions during the past few years.

I commend Ms. Bent for reporting her observation and concur with the generic identification of this bird (*Anser X Branta*). However I feel that there may be other possible species and/or races involved in the parentage of the goose she reported.

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Reply to Montgomery

Bob Montgomery raises interesting points in his critique of my identification of a goose with unusual plumage as a cross between *Branta canadensis* and *Anser albifrons* (Bent 1995). Most of his points question the species identification of the hybrid's *Anser* parent, with one point questioning the subspecies of *Branta* involved as the other parent. I will deal with the questions of the *Anser* parent first.

The main argument regarding the identity of the hybrid's *Anser* parent rests on the presence of free-flying "domestic" or "feral greylag" geese in flocks of resident Canada Geese (*B. c. maxima*) found in the Chicago area (his points a, b, d, e). All breeds of domestic geese, with the exceptions of the Chinese and the African, are derived from the Western Greylag Goose (*Anser anser anser*) (Delacour 1954, 1964; Scott

1972; Crawford 1984). While it was not entirely clear what Mr. Montgomery meant by "domestic" or "feral greylag" geese (were these geese actual escaped greylags? were they domestics of the grey, wild coloration? were they white?), they probably descend from domestic stock and therefore are of Western Greylag origin.

When determining the parent species of any hybrid we must look