

Miller observed one on the Delaware River at Essington, Delaware County, Pa.; on July 26, 1908, George noted 3 on the river behind the dyke at Fish House, Camden County, N. J., and on July 26, 1909, he saw a pair at Lardner's Point, also on the Delaware, and near Riverton, Burlington County, N. J.

At Essington, where my brothers saw one, Dr. J. P. Ball, of Frankford, Philadelphia, saw a pair in June, 1908, and a reliable resident of that place told him that Black Ducks occur on the river meadows there all summer, and was of the opinion that they bred sparingly in them. Near this locality, at Tincum, Delaware County, Mr. L. I. Smith has seen them as late as May 15, 1902.

Reliable gunners have also informed me of this bird's occurrence in summer on the Tincum marshes, where it is undoubtedly a rare breeder.

In his excellent paper, 'A Pensauken Diary,' published in 'Cassinia,' XI, 1907, Mr. C. J. Hunt mentions having seen one, as follows (page 49): "July 9 (1907).—Flushed a Black Duck on the upper creek. Can this bird nest among these marshes?"; and in the same paper (page 51) he includes it in his list of 'Summer Residents of the Pensauken Creek,' probably on the ground of seeing the foregoing bird.

However, the Black Duck is undeniably a rare summer resident on the upper part of this creek and I have the assurance of reliable farmers and gunners of its regular occurrence in summer upon it. It behooves the ornithologist to confirm these reports by finding a nest, but unfortunately the ardor of our ornithologists is deteriorating as regards swamp and marsh nest-hunting and it may be years before any of them will succeed in discovering a nest.—RICHARD F. MILLER, *Harrowgate, Philadelphia, Pa.*

**Ducks at Monroe, Michigan.**—Possibly some of the readers of 'The Auk' are not aware that the range of the Black Duck seems to be extending steadily westward, and to demonstrate this fact I quote some statistics from the score book of a Duck Club at Monroe, Michigan, at the western end of Lake Erie. Those who shot there from 1865 to 1880 tell me that the taking of a Black Duck was then so uncommon as to be a matter of comment. These figures are the percentages of Black Ducks to the aggregate number of Black and Mallard taken, fractions omitted.

1885...6%	1891...24%	1897...13%	1903...48%
6...7	2...12	8...21	4...40
7...14	3...7	9...9	5...33
8...14	4...8	1900...20	6...37
9...17	5...11	1...6	7...49
1890...20	6...14	2...10	8...41

This percentage increase in the Black Ducks is not due to any diminution in the number of Mallards, they being as abundant now as twenty years ago. There has, however, been a diminution in the annual take of late years, due to several causes: Fewer gunners through a reduction in the club's membership; the daily bag limit law enacted in 1905; and the fact

that Canvasbacks have so increased in numbers that marsh shooting is neglected for the bay. All of these causes, however, operate to reduce alike the take of Black Ducks and Mallards, both varieties being shot in the same ponds on the marshes. The Black Duck is also a warier bird and decoys less readily than any other species. Very few breed, but begin to arrive early in September, a week or ten days ahead of the Mallards, and remain to feed on the wild rice until winter sets in.

While all ducks seem to have increased in numbers of late years, the Canvasback is the most notable example. It has always in numbers frequented the celery bays, but commencing with 1902 it has been represented each autumn in most extraordinary numbers. During the past eight years — 1902 to 1909 — the number taken at the Club at Monroe, Michigan, is nearly three times as great as taken in the preceding eight years — 1894 to 1901, and this in view of the fact that during most of the later period the law has limited the daily bag to twenty-five, while in the earlier period there was no limit but conscience. There were, as stated before, also fewer gunners.

The first Canvasbacks arrive from the north about October 15 and remain until the first severe cold. In 1904 they were in such great numbers that after eating all the celery from the bay they frequented the larger ponds in the marsh, something not previously known to occur.— HAROLD HERRICK, *New York City*.

**A Small Flight of Gadwalls** (*Chaulelasmus streperus*) **near New York.**— Early in the morning of October 16, 1909, my young friends Allan and James Hand were watching at a pond on the salt marshes near Lawrence, L. I. About sunrise a flock of seven odd looking ducks circled the pond several times and finally six of them came to the decoys, four being shot. The boys remained an hour or so longer, seeing two or three more flocks that they felt sure were the same kind of duck, but none came near enough for positive identification. They brought the birds to me — to be identified as young Gadwalls, rather poor in flesh, their average weight being under twenty-four ounces. The best one I preserved.

My friend Col. Franklin Brandreth of Ossining, N. Y., tells me of a single specimen brought to him, that was killed near that place about October 29, 1909.

The marshes of Lake Erie are the nearest points to Long Island where the Gadwall is regularly found, and there they are not very common. The carefully kept record of a shooting club at the western end of the lake shows that in twenty-one years, to 1908, but one has been taken in each two hundred ducks, or about one-half per cent. of the total score. This year (1909), however, they were more abundant than usual, I personally securing eleven specimens, which is exactly the same number I have secured, in the aggregate, on the same marshes, during the previous eighteen years.— HAROLD HERRICK, *New York City*.