

Western Grebe in Illinois.—I am indebted to Mr. Boardman Conover for a specimen of the Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*), which he presented to me in the flesh on December 27, 1921, and which is now in my collection. Mr. Conover informed me that this bird was shipped to him on December 24 from Swan Lake, Putnam County, Illinois, where it had been killed probably that day or the day before.

The identification of the specimen was made with the assistance of Mr. C. C. Sanborn by comparison with skins in the Field Museum of Natural History.

I have not been able to find any previous record of the occurrence of the Western Grebe in Illinois.—STEPHEN S. GREGORY, JR., 345 Barry Ave., Chicago, Ill.

The Glaucous Gull at Ithaca, N. Y.—On February 13, 1921 a Glaucous Gull, *Larus hyperboreus* was observed in a large flock of Herring Gulls at the south end of Cayuga Lake. It was seen again on February 20, and on March 26 it was picked up dead and brought in to the museum of Cornell University by a vocational student. The bird was a male, not fully adult in plumage, numerous flecks of brownish being present on the wings and head. The specimen is now in the collection of the museum of Cornell University and forms the first record for the Cayuga Lake Basin.

On March 29, 1923 another specimen of this Gull was seen in practically the same spot. It was seen again on April 3, but has not been observed since. This bird, like the first one, was not pure white but showed faint brownish markings.

In view of the rarity of this species in central New York these records seem worthy of publication.—HERBERT FRIEDMAN AND DANA J. LEFFINGWELL, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y.

Concerning the Field Identification of the Anatidae.—In his recent paper on 'Field Studies of the Anatidae,' Mr. Ludlow Griscom has given us a valuable compilation of points not to be found in most textbooks, and yet extremely useful to the field student. Many of us who think we already know the Anatidae will find new and useful facts in this paper. There are, however, two points that have come into my own experience that have evidently escaped Mr. Griscom's attention, which I believe are worth putting on record to save the future field worker from possible mistakes in identification.

Many species of Ducks have the head marked with green or black with greenish reflections. Observations on a semi-domesticated drake Mallard showed me that when the bird swam with head toward the observer, the color of the head appeared to be violet rather than green. Later examination of a mounted drake Golden-eye showed the same thing to be true. Examination of other species shows that this seems, generally true of all species with heads green or marked with green. The feathers are green when viewed directly, but when the head of the bird is toward the observer, they appear violet.

It is not often that a Scaup Duck can be seen closely enough in life to make out the color of the reflections on the head. When such a case does occur, however, it seems entirely possible that a person seeing a Greater Scaup, with its head turned toward him, would see violet reflections and identify it as the Lesser. One might also easily imagine a case where an observer seeing a Golden-eye in such a position would make out violet reflections. The spot in front of the eye, from its foreshortened appearance, might be easily imagined crescentic, and the bird thought to be Barrow's Golden-eye.

Plumages of immature birds have not been described fully or completely in most text-books. In some cases these plumages differ enough from the adult to make mistakes for some other species possible. In December 1921, I was hunting Ducks on the Penfield Reef at Fairfield, Conn. I was particularly anxious to get a Scaup Duck, a bird that was less common on the reef than the Scoters and Old-squaws. Finally I saw a bird approaching with black neck and upper breast and lower parts abruptly white. I felt no doubt at all that this was a Scaup Duck, and as it flew almost directly over my head I took careful aim and shot it. The bird I picked up, proved a young male Surf Scoter.

Few books describe the plumages of young males of Surf and White-winged Scoters. While not so purely white beneath as is the Scaup, they nevertheless have much the same appearance when flying toward an observer. They seem to wear this plumage throughout the first winter, for I have seen birds in it in May. I puzzled for a number of years over a young male White-winged Scoter I had once seen under rather unusual circumstances. Its description remained unnamed in my note-book for a number of years, for none of the books I possessed described this plumage. Finally, when I happened to shoot a bird in this plumage, the mystery was solved.—ARETAS A. SAUNDERS, *Fairfield, Conn.*

Ducks useful in Arkansas as Scavengers of Red Rice.—At least \$150,000 a year is saved to Arkansas rice growers by migratory wild Ducks feeding on red rice, according to an estimate furnished to the Biological Survey by the Board of Directors of the Arkansas Rice Growers' Cooperative Association. In that State the Ducks are so beneficial that every effort is made to attract them on their way south. The present early closed season and an even smaller bag limit are protective measures strongly approved in Arkansas.

The control of the growth of wild or red rice is one of the greatest difficulties incidental to rice culture. The land becomes easily polluted with red rice which is scattered on the ground when the good rice is cut, and comes up in the next crop in the spring. Many of the red grains are forced below the surface of the ground by wagon wheels and the feet of the horses and men, when the bundles of good rice are hauled out to be threshed. Although thousands of Blackbirds use the rice fields for feeding grounds when migrating, they do not get the grains that are covered with water