

house, is across half a mile or more of sandy waste land surrounded, on all sides by Long Island Sound. Here, in company with thousands of Scaup, Scoters, Black Duck and other species, a flock of Canada Geese, varying in numbers from one hundred and fifty in mid-winter to five hundred and over in late March, has been present since November last. The writer and Mr. De L. F. Johnson of Scarsdale found upwards of six hundred there on April 11 this year. Among them was a Snow Goose, which we were compelled, because of sight testimony only, to record as *C. h. nivalis*, although our observations, extended over half an hour and at distances varying from two hundred yards to fifty feet, suggest the possibility of its having been the western race, *Chen hyperboreus hyperboreus*. It was first observed on a sand bar of the inner bay in company with several hundred Canada Geese. We watched it both walking and at rest. Walking, the gait and carriage suggested a domesticated species, especially as the body was carried well forward and the neck partly curved as against the "high necked stalking" of *Branta c. canadensis*. Resting, it squatted low to or on the ground with wings slightly lifted. In the air, it flew with far more rapid wing beats than its companions; neck outstretched and bent slightly downward as in *Colymbus holboellii*. On the water it floated with all the grace of a Swan and we noted also the uplifted wings showing plainly the black primaries with ashy coverts against the snow white of the body plumage. Having observed the bird for half an hour or more, we had turned away and were already out of sight when, with a high pitched honking more nasal than that of the Canada Goose, it passed directly over our heads at an altitude of not more than fifty feet. We were then able to observe, closely; the bill, short and high at the base, dull red with a blackish line along the lower mandible; feet dull red; and, an apparent faint, rusty wash, along the neck. Not until it had disappeared into the southwest did we cease to hear the sharp falsetto honking. We were fortunate in being able to observe the bird and make comparisons as to size not only with the much larger Canada Goose but with Black Ducks and Herring Gulls which were swimming in its immediate vicinity. Both Mr. Johnson and I remarked that it appeared, at a distance of a hundred yards, but slightly larger than a Herring Gull. In fact so slight was the difference in size that it was difficult to single it out from among the Gulls. We agreed, however, that, resting on sight observation, we could claim no more than that it was a Greater Snow Goose. The writer has been keeping records since 1906 in the Westchester Co. and lower Fairfield Co. region. To his knowledge this is the first appearance of *Chen hyperboreus nivalis* on this shore of Long Island Sound.—RUTGERS R. COLES, *Mamaroneck, New York*.

Status of the Ring-necked Duck in South Carolina.—The rarity or abundance of this species in South Carolina has been a matter of discussion and it has been reputed as rare, erratic or very rare in different localities. As a matter of fact the evidence seems to point to a peculiarly local distribution.

However erratic, uncommon, or rare, it may be in some sections, there is, at least, one locality where this Duck may always be found in numbers. The center of abundance in South Carolina is in the general region of Green Pond, and the Ashepoo River, about 50 miles to the southward of Charleston. This is particularly true of the plantation of Mr. John F. Maybank of this city, which is known as The Oaks.

On this place is a very extensive backwater, or reserve, a flooded cypress forest, having large areas of open water, dotted here and there with floating islands of vegetation, and bordered with magnificent, moss-draped cypress trees. In this locality, throughout the winter the Ring-necked Duck occurs in enormous numbers. Mr. Maybank tells me that nowhere in the state are they to be found in such abundance. It has been my good fortune to study Ducks in this backwater, and the following observations on the Ringneck may be of interest.

During February of this year, I made a trip to The Oaks for the purpose of securing some specimens of Ducks for the Charleston Museum. Going out into the backwater in the afternoon we watched the ducks coming in, and it was indeed a memorable sight. In small flocks, large flocks, scattered bands, and individuals, they whistled in, curving about and dropping in about us on all sides. Even then it could be seen that *M. collaris* abounded. Early the next morning I was out with a negro paddler, and we set out the decoys in one of the best locations. High water had flooded the blinds, and we simply pushed the boat back among the reeds, and awaited results, which were not long in coming.

Soon after dawn, the Ducks began flying, and I do not think I ever spent a more delightful morning. The Ring-necks were present in multitudes, and, at a conservative estimate, outnumbered all other species by at least 30, or more, to 1. There was absolutely no trouble in securing the specimens wanted by the museum, both sexes being taken, and, after this was done, I laid the gun aside, and simply watched the Ducks decoy. Scores of beautiful shots presented themselves, and the paddler must have thought that he had a crazy man in the boat, as Widgeon, Mallard, and Gadwall came to, and hovered over, the decoys, and were allowed to alight, or pass on unmolested. I tried to explain to him that I had what I wanted, and was perfectly content to sit and watch, but this could hardly persuade him that I had not taken leave of my senses to pass up such shooting.

For several hours the Ducks continued to fly well, about and around us constantly, the little Rink-neck always predominating. I had little trouble in identifying them at any reasonable distance by the brilliant bill markings. These were extremely conspicuous, and stood out against the light in a vivid manner, I had never been so impressed by this before. The specimens taken showed the colors to be very highly developed, and certainly they could have hardly been more intense. Upon remarks to Mr. Maybank later on in the day about the abundance of the species, he assured me that it was nothing unusual, as each winter was the same, and

the Ring-necks were always the commonest Duck he had. As an illustration, a shooting party of ten guns made a bag of 80 Ducks during last January, and over 70 were Ring-necks, no particular comment being caused. Food is planted for them, and the nature of the country suits them. To a large extent they feed upon pondweeds (*Najas*) and the water-lily (*Castalia*), I took a male with four of the tubers of the latter in his throat, which had evidently just been swallowed and gave the throat a peculiar, swollen appearance.

This species on the South Carolina coast prefers freshwater at all times. I do not remember ever having seen one on salt water, although they doubtless do occur there at times. They also seem to show a decided preference for the larger backwaters and reserves which are wooded, or bordered by the cypress swamps, and resort to the open areas of water found in such localities. In the more open, ricefields they are much less common, and occur only erratically. Just why this should be is hard to say. Many of our Ducks are as common in the reserves as they are in the ricefields, and vice versa, but in some cases, of which the Ring-neck is an outstanding example, this does not hold good. At The Oaks, in one morning, I have seen and identified twelve species of Ducks, many of which are very common in other situations.

If more care would be exercised in separating the Ring-neck from the other Scaup, by sportsmen in general, it is my opinion this species would be found to occur in more localities than is now supposed.—ALEXANDER SPRUNT, JR., *Charleston Museum, Charleston, S. C.*

The Egret in Clinton and Lycoming Counties, Pennsylvania.—

Two specimens of the Egret (*Casmerodius egretta*) taken in central Pennsylvania have recently been brought to my attention. The first was taken on July 22, 1921, at the paper mill basin of the New York and Pennsylvania Company, near Lock Haven, Clinton County, by Mr. C. R. Hulihan of Lock Haven. The bird's leg was injured. It had arrived during a severe storm which followed a period of intense heat. This specimen is now the property of the Lock Haven High School.

On the same date another Egret was taken at Williamsport, Lycoming County, along the Susquehanna River. The two specimens were mounted at Williamsport, but further details of the capture of the second specimen have not been ascertained. I am indebted to Professor Nelson P. Benson, Superintendent of Lock Haven Schools, and Mr. John B. Ross, Division Supervisor of the State Game Commission, for bringing these interesting records to light.—GEORGE MIKSCH SUTTON, *Game Commission, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.*

Spring Record for American Egret at Princeton, N. J.—On April 11, 1926, we discovered what we believe to be the first spring record for the American Egret in New Jersey in recent years. We were visiting all the ponds about Princeton in search of Ducks and on looking up Plainsboro