

drake teal, at Troy Meadows with a flock of about thirty Green-winged Teal, which showed a white stripe on the side and lacked the light crescent bar in front of the wing. The bird was in sight only a short time before the whole flock became alarmed and flew off. On April 16 I again found a European Teal and was able to watch it for over an hour. On this occasion, after considerable time spent in stalking, the bird was seen at a distance of less than fifty yards with 8x glasses. It was with a flock of about twenty-five Green-winged Teal and direct comparison with drakes of this species was possible. The white scapular stripe was rather conspicuous and easily seen in fair light. The absence of the white mark in front of the wing was easily observed whenever the bird turned sideways. This individual was more active than its associates which spent most of the time resting on grassy islands while the European Teal swam around almost continuously often going back and forth several times over the same ten or fifteen foot stretch of open water. In flight I could not distinguish it from the others.

On April 30 I saw the bird again at short range and in good light. This time it was accompanied by a drake Green-winged Teal, two female teal presumably Green-winged, and a drake European Widgeon.—JAMES L. EDWARDS, *Montclair, N. J.*

A Pintail Winters in Montana.—A male American Pintail (*Dafila acuta tzitzihoa*) spent at least the latter part of the winter of 1931-32 near Fortine, in the extreme northwestern corner of Montana. It was observed by the writer frequently during late January, February, and March at a spring-fed old river channel where Mallards and Green-winged Teal winter regularly.

So far as the writer is aware, the only previous published record of the occurrence of this species in Montana during winter was obtained at Choteau, December 27, 1912 (Saunders, *Condor*, xvi, p. 128).—WINTON WEYDEMEYER, *Fortine, Montana.*

Number of Feathers on a Duck.—I recently counted 11,903 feathers (exclusive of down) on an adult female mallard. This information, though meagre, is offered as an addition to the totals given by McGregor (*Condor*, v. 5, p. 17, 1903) of 1889 feathers on a skin of *Ammodramus sandwichensis* and 6544 on one of *Larus glaucescens*.—PHOEBE KNAPPEN, *Washington, D. C.*

Shoveller Nesting near Chicago.—On June 4, 1932, I found a nest of the Shoveller duck at McGinnes Slough, near Orland, in the Cook County (Illinois) forest preserves. The adult birds had been seen repeatedly at this place throughout the latter part of May and, as they were always found in the same small bay, it was suspected that they were nesting. Search was made for the nest on several dates, but it was not until June 4 that it was finally located, in thick grass on a dry hillside about 150 yards from the water. The nest contained nine eggs, which

hatched presumably on June 5, as the young birds were gone when I visited the nest on the morning of June 6.

The Shoveller is a fairly common migrant here and is occasionally seen during June, but I do not know of any other recent breeding records for Cook County, Illinois. At McGinnes Slough, where this nest was found, the Blue-winged Teal, Coot and Florida Gallinule breed in considerable numbers.—C. BLAIR COURSEN, 761 East 69th Place, Chicago, Illinois.

The Color of the Iris in the American Merganser and Holboell's Grebe.—In all descriptions and illustrations of the American Merganser, (*Mergus americanus*) the iris is given as red or carmine. In fifty years acquaintance with the species I have never seen either a male or female with any trace of red in the eye.

In the adult male the iris is very dark brown sometimes with an outer ring of dull yellow which is concealed by the eyelid in life, the eye at a little distance appearing black.

In the adult female the iris is sometimes similar to the male at others with an outer ring of paler brown, more reddish, and usually with the concealed outer ring of yellow.

Young birds of both sexes after the downy stage have eyes that are mostly yellow with hazel brown around the pupil.

I am publishing this note just now as in the recent 'Birds of Minnesota.' I am credited with an illustration showing both sexes with scarlet eyes, in my original painting the irides were colored as in the above descriptions.

Does this Merganser ever have red eyes or is this color a mistaken idea following the actual color of the Old World species, *Mergus castor*? In my opinion the two birds are not conspecific.

In Holboell's Grebe an exactly similar error persists, in this case I am absolutely certain that no grebe of this species ever had red eyes in any plumage unless a shot-damaged eye suffused with blood might have been taken for a red-colored one.

In Forbush's 'Birds of Massachusetts' the illustration shows the winter plumaged bird with eyes and bill of the correct color evidently drawn by Fuertes from life; but his figure of the summer plumaged adult is wrong in the color of the iris and shape and color of the bill.

The bird reaches its maximum of abundance in British Columbia, is seldom out of sight of the windows of my home here, and within a few miles hundreds of pairs breed.

The iris in the adults of both sexes is dark brown usually with an outer concealed ring of yellowish or gold, the brown sometimes speckled with gold.

In young birds and those in their second year the iris is largely yellow, usually brown around the pupil. The eyelid is always yellow.

Why this grebe alone among the grebes is supposed to have a brown iris in the winter and red in summer it is difficult to understand. No other grebe shows any change in eye color with the seasons.