

Old breeding records of the Ring-necked Duck in New Brunswick.—In view of the recent reports of the breeding of the Ring-necked Duck, *Aythya collaris* (Donovan), in New Brunswick which have appeared in the Auk and in the Reports of the Department of Lands and Mines of the Province of New Brunswick, I feel that certain old breeding records which have come to my attention should be made public.

Mendall (Auk, 55: 401-404, 1938) refers to Boardman (Proc. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist., 9: 122-132, 1862) as recording the breeding of this species in the St. Croix valley either in Maine or New Brunswick. Boardman did find the Ring-necked breeding in New Brunswick but not until some years after his list referred to above was published. The 1862 reference to this species reads: "Rare. Does not breed." Boardman's collection of mounted birds, bird skins, and eggs was recently transferred to the New Brunswick Museum and, although the collection is now largely devoid of data, I have found a number of interesting records. One of these is a set of four eggs of the Ring-necked Duck taken at St. Stephen, New Brunswick, May 29, 1874, by G. A. Boardman himself. Corresponding with Dr. Alexander Wetmore, I learned that Boardman had placed three sets of eggs of the Ring-necked Duck in the United States National Museum. These also were taken at St. Stephen, New Brunswick, May 29, 1874, May 31, 1874, and May 13, 1876. From Boardman's correspondence with Prof. Spencer F. Baird of the Smithsonian Institution, as quoted by S. L. Boardman (The Naturalist of the St. Croix, Bangor: 204-205, 1903), it appears that two broods of the Ring-necked Duck had been found near St. Stephen, New Brunswick, or in adjacent Maine, as early as 1870. It is evident then that it was not a single nest but quite a breeding colony that was located at that time and that it persisted for at least seven years and probably very much longer.

With these records before us, it is obvious that the Ring-necked Duck was not a newcomer as a summer resident in New Brunswick when found in June, 1937, by H. S. Peters, Col. H. H. Ritchie, and James Catt as reported by Mendall (1938). I am inclined to consider the present abundance of this species in New Brunswick (already reported by Col. H. H. Ritchie, then Chief Game Warden, in his annual reports 1939-1944) as a natural increase of small colonies which have been here since, and probably long before, Boardman found the first brood in 1870, and which may or may not have been supplemented by an eastern movement of the species.

There are no breeding records of this species in New Brunswick between 1876 and 1937 but this is not evidence that it was not breeding here as there are no published breeding records before 1937 of any of the water-fowl for the localities where Peters and Mendall have since found the Ring-necked Duck and it seems improbable that anyone had previously made any intensive study of the breeding waterfowl in this part of central New Brunswick. There is a male in the New Brunswick Museum collection taken at Grand Lake, Queens County, New Brunswick, October 10, 1905. Although this may well have been a migrant it is significant that it was taken where Peters found broods of young thirty-two years later and not far from where Mendall (Auk, 62: 465, 1945) found broods in 1944.—W. AUSTIN SQUIRES, *New Brunswick Museum, Saint John, New Brunswick, Canada.*