

The present new species is here described through the kindness of Dr. C. Hart Merriam. The writer is also indebted to Dr. J. A. Allen for the use of material in the American Museum of Natural History; to Mr. Robert Ridgway for a similar courtesy with regard to the National collection; and to Mr. William Brewster for the loan of specimens of *Empidonax cineritius*.

A NOTEWORTHY PLUMAGE OBSERVED IN THE
AMERICAN EIDER DRAKE (*SOMATERIA*
DRESSERI).

BY ARTHUR H. NORTON.

IN THE ornithological literature there has appeared from time to time, notes reporting the occurrence of the Pacific Eider drake in Atlantic districts of North America. These reports have been based on Eiders having a black V-shaped figure on the throat, a character commonly used, in connection with a white mantle, as diagnostic of *Somateria v-nigra*.

Such records have been questioned, but apparently a final decision has been deferred. Therefore the belief is entertained that a description of certain specimens of *Somateria dresseri*, taken on the east coast of the United States, is of sufficient interest to warrant its appearance here.

The present data clearly show that the black lancet is a character of frequent occurrence in the young drakes of *S. dresseri*; and there are strong reasons for the belief that it occurs in *S. mollissima borealis*. (See Hagerup, Bds. of Greenland, p. 42.)

During the winter of 1891, I received in the flesh, from Penobscot Bay, Me., a specimen of *S. dresseri*, showing marks of immaturity and having a distinct dusky or black lancet on the throat. It being unique in my experience, I wrote to the collector to send any other specimens having black on the throat, with the

result of receiving another very similar to it, and two adult drakes with black spots on the throat, located at the position of the junction of the two lines which form the lancet or V when present.

On questioning several collectors who live on the Maine coast, I was assured that they had quite often seen such marks in young drakes. Upon the investigation of a large series of these drakes in all stages of plumage, it was found that this feature is of irregular appearance, or, what is perhaps best understood, as an occasional reversion to the characters of a progenitor from which it sprung, in common with *v-nigra*.

It may be stated of the birds having the black figure, that, aside from the presence of that mark, their only departures from the typical adult male of their species, are fully shown to be coincident with stages of immaturity, and that they show nothing that can be considered as of a hybridic nature.

Description of Specimens having Black Marks on Throat.

No. 342. Coll. A. H. N.; Penobscot Bay, Me., winter, 1891. *Somateria dresseri*, male, nearly mature. Differing from adult male in having a few dusky tipped lesser wing-coverts; dusky tips to falcate tertials; frontal processes but .9 mm. wide near apex. Differing from the normal drake in having a dusky V or lancet on the throat, 46 mm. long. This specimen is matched in a normal young drake preserved in the same collection.

No. 439, Coll. A. H. N.; Penobscot Bay, Me., Dec., 1893. *S. dresseri*, male, nearly mature. Similar to the last, except in having more dusky tipped lesser coverts, falcate tertials tipped with a deeper shade of dusky, and frontal process 12 mm. wide. It differs from the normal drake in having a dusky lancet .38 mm. long, on the throat.

No. 340, Coll. A. H. N.; Penobscot Bay, Me., Mar. 20, 1891. *S. dresseri*, male, perfectly mature. No dusky in white of the wing; frontal process 14 mm. wide near apex. Differs from normal drakes in the presence of a dusky spot, 10 mm. long, on the throat.

No. 341, Coll. A. H. N.; Penobscot Bay, Me., winter, 1891. *S. dresseri* adult male in high (winter) plumage. Frontal processes 14½ mm. wide near apex. Normal except in the presence of a black spot 13 mm. long at the position of the apex of the lancet.