

The following description may be of interest, though lacking in certain details, as it was taken from the mounted bird making a proper examination of the wings, axillars, etc., impossible.

Head brownish gray, darker on crown. Chin and throat white, this area extending half way around the upper neck, its posterior margin being less clearly defined owing to some of the feathers having narrow ashy tips. Rest of neck ashy. Upper breast with a light ashy area about one and a quarter inches wide, very slightly washed with light brown, extending about three quarters around the body. Breast dark gray with tinge of light brown, the ends of the feathers being minutely dotted and streaked with black. Lower breast, sides, belly, and under tail-coverts brownish gray, lighter on the belly. Scapulars brownish gray, some of the feathers having narrow ashy tips. Long scapulars more pearly. Lesser wing-coverts ashy. Secondaries and ends of greater wing-coverts white. Primaries brownish black; alula blackish brown. Lower back and tail-coverts brownish gray. Tail blackish brown with a slight hoary tinge.

Measurements in inches as follows: culmen, 1.55; bill along gape, 2.25; tarsus, 1.55; middle toe, 2.15.

This specimen is now on exhibition, with another young male of more advanced plumage, in the museum of the Boston Society of Natural History, and is I believe the forty-fourth extant to date.—WINTHROP S. BROOKS, *Milton, Mass.*

Massachusetts Geese.—The past autumn of 1911 will long be remembered by the gunners along the track of Canada Geese in eastern Massachusetts, on account of the great abundance of these birds. The numbers seen and taken were extremely unusual, and probably have not been exceeded for a great many years.

It has been suggested that protection of fowl on the island of Anticosti may have had something to do with the present apparent increase of our coastal flight. Be that as it may, the next few years will show whether this present abundance is a real increase or only a temporary fluctuation.

In 1908 about 1450 geese were taken in eastern Massachusetts and in 1909 about 1900 (see *Auk* for July, 1910). This year I took the trouble to again estimate the total kill, though in 1910 I have no figures. The total arrived at for this past season of 1911 is 3518, or nearly twice as many as for 1909 and almost two and a half times as many as for 1908.

There were 2112 geese counted at Dedham and over 1000 of these lit in the pond.

The figures from which the 1911 totals were obtained are given below.

Duxbury Bay	800
Silver Lake	475
Accord Pond, Hingham	300
Great South Pond, Plymouth	225
John's Pond, Sandwich	185
Robbins Pond, Bridgewater	200

Dedham Pond, Pembroke	245
Mashpee Pond, Mashpee	120
Snippituit Pond, N. Rochester	100
Abington Meadows	100
Whitman Pond, Weymouth	120
Great Pond, Weymouth	35
Hingham Harbor	70
Ponkapoag Pond, Canton	108
Indian Head Pond, Pembroke	50
Factory Pond, Hanson	50
Chebacco Pond, Essex	41
Lily Pond, Cohasset	45
Bog in South Hingham	50
Jacob's Pond, Assinippi	50
All other places, about	150
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Total	3519

These figures cannot be actually vouched for, but I believe that they are not far from the actual totals. The figure 150, for "all other places" is probably much too low. Mr. A. B. Gardner of Accord, Mass., who collected most of this data for me can be absolutely relied upon. He writes under date of March 7, 1912. "I know that most of these records are correct, and think the rest of them are very close to the right number as I saw someone from most of the places, etc."

There are about 40 gunning stands included in the records.—J. C. PHILLIPS, *Wenham, Mass.*

A Peculiar Plumage of the Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis canadensis*).—On Nov. 29, 1911, Dr. Rockwell A. Coffin, of Boston, Mass., killed at Clark's Island, near Plymouth, Mass., a male Canada goose, on which the white patch on throat and cheeks was missing. The bird's head was entirely black, with the exception of a few small lighter colored feathers on its throat, which showed only upon a very close examination. "He came in with seven other geese on the 29th of November. The other geese were darker on the side of the head than usual." Possibly this may have been an entire family, in which this peculiarity of plumage had become more or less marked.—FRED. H. KENNARD, *Boston, Mass.*

Late Record of the Red-backed Sandpiper (*Pelidna alpina sakhalina*) in Massachusetts.—On Dec. 27, 1911, I noted a small flock of Red-backed Sandpipers (*Pelidna alpina sakhalina*) at Muskeget Island, Mass. On the 31st I came upon a flock of nine in a driving snowstorm, two of which I secured and found very fat.

I last noted four of these birds on the 14th of January, 1912. Though the nine previous days had been very severe, covering almost all the shore