

Greater Snow Goose (*Chen hyperboreus nivalis*) in Arkansas.—On March 28, 1913, a farmer living three miles west of this city shot an adult male Greater Snow Goose in his field. The bird was seen feeding all day but no others of its species were observed near. I examined it carefully in the flesh and found it to be in perfect plumage. Dr. C. H. Luther of this city, who made it up into a skin, informed me that the specimen was in good condition and that he found only fresh wounds on the body.—ALBERT LANO, Fayetteville, Arkansas.

Feeding Wild Ducks on Sodus Bay, N. Y.—Sodus Bay, one of the largest bays on the southern shore of Lake Ontario, was the scene of an interesting experiment in the feeding of wild ducks during the months of February and March, 1913. The bay, which is a large irregularly shaped body of water, containing several islands, is frequented in the spring and fall by large numbers of ducks. The winter was unusually mild up to the first of February, and many ducks remained on a large area of the bay which was open, and where they apparently found plenty of food. About February 1 the weather turned suddenly cold, with heavy snow storms and high winds. This caused the bay to freeze entirely over, preventing the ducks from reaching their feeding grounds. On February 4 the weather was very stormy, and several thousand ducks were noted in places still remaining open. On February 5 Mr. Claude T. DeVille, the state game protector at Sodus Point, noted that the ducks were flying to places kept open by men harvesting ice. The ducks were very fearless and were apparently suffering from lack of food. On the succeeding day, February 6, he obtained a quantity of wheat, and tried feeding the ducks. The grain was readily eaten and he immediately wrote the New York State Conservation Commission, notifying them of the presence of the ducks and the necessity of relief measures. The Commission promptly responded, and on February 10, Mr. DeVille received word to purchase grain and feed the ducks. He first tried feeding by throwing the grain in the water, but the ducks were so weak that they apparently had difficulty in reaching bottom in sixteen feet of water. This fact alone shows the extremes to which the ducks were reduced, as they were mainly Bluebills, Redheads and Canvasbacks, all of which feed at considerable depths. He then tried placing the grain on the ice on a place scraped clear of snow near the edge of the open water. This proved successful, as the ducks immediately came out on the ice, feeding like barnyard fowls. At one place near where men employed by the Northern Central Railway Co. were harvesting ice, there were often six or seven hundred ducks feeding at one time. The ducks were fed in this manner at all the places which remained open, which varied from three or four to six or eight. They were fed at least once and often twice each day, and during the period from February 10 to March 10, when the feeding was discontinued, thirty-eight bushels of wheat were fed.

The ducks soon learned to look for the grain and upon seeing Mr. DeVille starting out on the ice, would fly to the places where the grain was placed.

At one time all the holes had frozen over, and the grain was placed on the bare ice, the ducks coming in from the lake and lighting on the ice to feed. This was at a distance of about a quarter of a mile from the open water in the lake. On February 21, being temporarily out of wheat, cracked corn was tried, but the ducks apparently did not relish it, and did not clean it up, as they did the wheat. During a period from February 12 to 16, Mr. DeVille estimated the number of ducks was at least ten thousand. They gradually scattered with the coming of milder weather, but there were several thousand still present on March 18.

The ducks were about seventy-five per cent Bluebills, or Scaups, the remainder being about evenly divided between Canvasbacks and Redheads, with a few Whistlers.

On March 13 when the writer visited the bay he counted in an open place between the outlet of the bay and Sand Point, about five hundred Bluebills, one hundred Redheads, a few Canvasbacks, about a dozen Mallard, three or four Black Ducks and several Holboëll's and Horned Grebes. At this time the ducks were apparently able to take care of themselves, were feeding in the usual manner, and did not come for the grain.

Mr. DeVille stated that the ducks were in such poor condition, that he had seen many with ice frozen to their feathers, the wing feathers being sometimes frozen together. Many also had balls of ice over the bill, often extending to the eyes. Fourteen ducks were found dead, eleven Bluebills, one Canvasback and two Redheads. One Bluebill drake found in full plumage weighed one pound and three ounces.

Great credit must be given to both Mr. DeVille, who is a game protector of a type we need more of, and the New York State Conservation Commission, for their prompt action in this matter, for there is no doubt that if they had not acted in time, thousands of ducks would have died of starvation.—H. E. GORDON, *Rochester, N. Y.*

Early Occurrence of Rails in Massachusetts.—On August 26, 1913, a Yellow Rail (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*) was taken in Longmeadow near Springfield, Mass., and on the 22d. of the same month, a King Rail, *Rallus elegans*, was captured in the same town.

These are the earliest autumnal dates recorded for the appearance of either of these species of birds in this part of the Connecticut Valley, although I believe that both kinds are more often represented here than is generally supposed, and it is possible that they breed here.

In Massachusetts, under a very unwise state statute purporting to be for the protection of certain kinds of so-called marsh birds, the open season for Rallidæ begins as early as August 1, and on that day in Longmeadow, a sportsman caught a young Virginia Rail that was still in the downy state, and probably not more than ten days old.—ROBERT O. MORRIS, *Springfield, Mass.*

Woodcock in Ohio Co., West Virginia.—The first authentic record of the occurrence of the Woodcock (*Philohela minor*) in Ohio County, West