

ANOTHER "SWOOSE" OR SWAN × GOOSE HYBRID.

BY JOHN C. PHILLIPS.

(Plate V.)

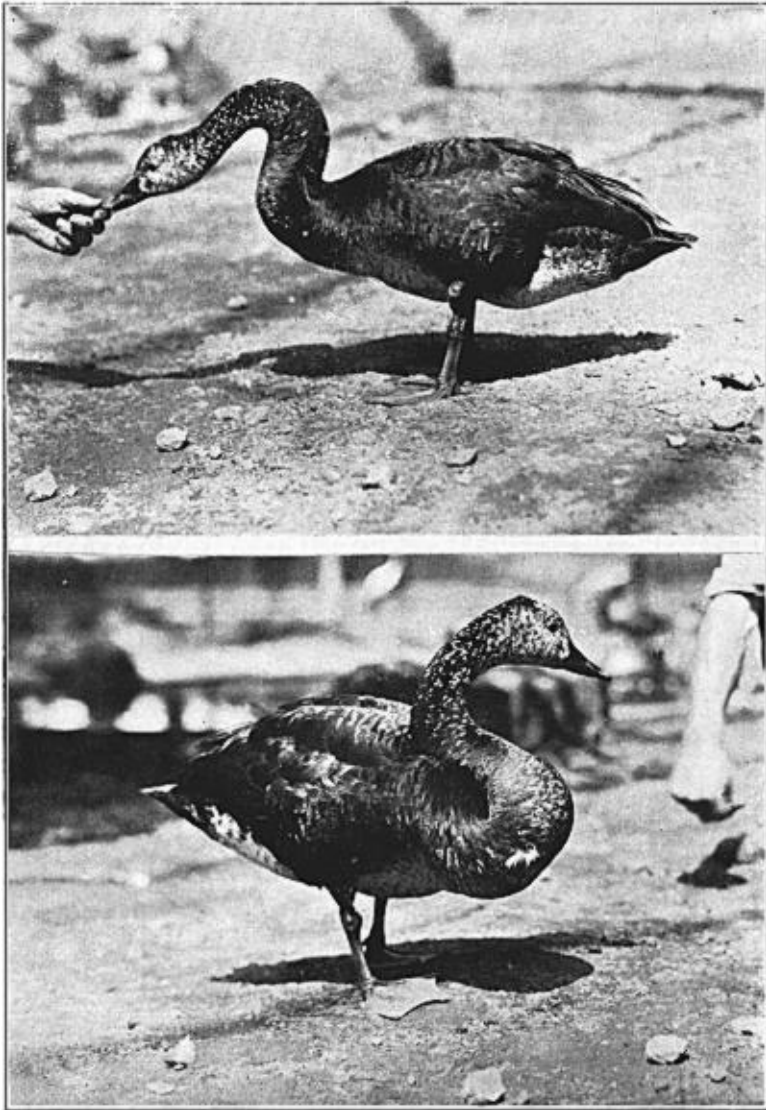
ON the accompanying plate I present some photographs of an interesting hybrid which came into my hands in September 1925. This was the product of a union between a male Black Australian Swan (*Chenopsis atrata*) and a female Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*).

This truly astonishing bird was reared on the estate of Mr. E. R. Peirce at Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts, in the spring of 1924. The Goose hatched one young by her unusual mate (the other eggs having been removed) and this lone bird reached maturity. This unique specimen stayed around with its parents, although unopinioned, until May 1925, when it suddenly departed. However, it did not get far from home but was picked up in a back-yard in Cambridge, only a few miles away and carried to the Boston Zoological Garden at Franklin Park. Mr. Peirce had already promised the bird to me, and so, during the summer, hearing that a more or less fabulous fowl had arrived from nowhere in particular, I visited the Park and found Mr. Peirce's long lost "Swoose." This was in early September 1925, when the bird was a year and a half old. A few days later I took it to Wenham, but it was then in very poor condition, little more than a bunch of feathers, and could not be induced to eat. It died in October and the skeleton is preserved in the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Cambridge.

At that time I supposed this monstrosity to be unique, but I now find that similar birds were bred in the Edinburgh Gardens and are mentioned in the 'Avicultural Magazine' for April 1918 (p. 204). Swan-goose hybrids are certainly very rare considering the enormous number of opportunities for crossing that exist in ornamental ponds all over the world. Several cases are mentioned in E. Hopkinson's 'Records of Birds Bred in Captivity' (Witherby, 1924); these include Common Swan × Domestic Goose; Common Swan × Hybrid Goose, and Black Swan × Domestic Goose.

The photographs give a good idea of the appearance of the bird which was very awkward and "bow-heavy." The size was large, the bird probably weighing when in good condition far more than a Canada Goose. The voice was very peculiar indeed and seemed to consist of various notes, some of which were fine, like those of the Australian Swan, and some much coarser and louder. Unfortunately I had no chance to make any observations on this point as the bird died a few days after reaching my farm.

Wenham, Mass.



SWAN GOOSE HYBRID
BLACK AUSTRALIAN SWAN × CANADA GOOSE