

**White-fronted Geese Wintering at Vernon, Texas.**—In November, 1929, a single White-fronted Goose appeared at the Zacaquista Ranch, fourteen miles south of Vernon, Texas, and stayed with a bunch of tame geese until March, 1930. Late in November, 1930, a lone White-fronted Goose appeared back at the same place. In November it disappeared for about three days and returned with another White-fronted Goose and the two remained until early April, 1931, and again disappeared. Late in December, 1931, three White-fronted Geese appeared at the same place and are today with the tame geese. These birds are gentle and allow you to come up to within ten feet of them any time.—R. L. MORE, *Vernon, Texas.*

**Lesser Snow Goose in South Carolina.**—On November 11, 1931, a strange goose was shot on the Grove Plantation of Mr. J. Thompson Brown, near Adams Run, Charleston County, S. C. A hunting party was approaching the duck pen in the rice fields when seven Canada Geese (*Branta c. canadensis*) and a strange white goose arose and flew away. They had evidently been feeding with the live duck decoys in the pen. The Canada Geese did not return but the other bird after making a wide circle came back and was shot. Its plumage and measurements were carefully noted by Mr. Brown and later given to me. Only the wings were saved.

The bird seems to be a Lesser Snow Goose (*Chen hyperborea hyperborea*) in immature plumage; measuring length 24 ins., wing spread 48 ins., and wing 15 ins. It is apparently the second record for the state.—J. WILLCOX BROWN, *White Oaks, Montchanin, Delaware.*

**A Change in Distribution of the Fulvous Tree Duck (*Dendrocygna bicolor helva*) in Texas.**—The common notion regarding the distribution of this duck in Texas seems to be that its summer habitat is the Lower Rio Grande Valley where it spends much of its time in trees, making its nest in the natural cavities thereof, and securing its food in cornfields. This was doubtless the case many years ago but it is now untrue in all three particulars. The late Capt. R. D. Camp of Brownsville, himself an active collector of bird skins, told me two or three years ago that he was anxious to have a few skins of this duck and inquired of me if I knew where they might be obtained. They had long since disappeared from their old haunts.

A recent excellent work on the present status of wild fowl says of this bird that it is nowhere common in the United States except in Southern California and that it "occasionally" breeds in the western part of the Gulf district. The authors, Philips and Lincoln, had access to the available literature on the subject so it is evident that it is not well known that the Fulvous Tree Duck breeds commonly in the rice-field region sixty or seventy miles west and southwest of Houston.

About twenty years ago it began to appear in small numbers near Bay City in Matagorda County, apparently having worked its way northward along the Gulf coast, and about two years later it was noted at Eagle Lake in Colorado County at which point it has been under my observation for a number of years. This region, where the chief agricultural activity is the

growing of rice seems to be its center of distribution. It should be noted that the lake, covering some two thousand acres, lies a mile or two away from the town bearing the name Eagle Lake. It is a paradise for ducks during the winter months no less than twenty species having been recorded there from time to time.

The local name for this duck is "Mexican Squealer," indicative of its source and note. Not many are to be seen in winter except when there is a succession of unusually mild days. About the middle of April, the first migrants begin to appear and within thirty days it is very common in the lake. While there are trees in abundance around the lake and plenty of them have hollows, I have never yet known one of these ducks to deposit its eggs in a hollow tree or to so much as alight on a tree. The nesting season is somewhat later than that of the Mottled Duck which is a constant resident about the lake. Many of the nests of the Tree Duck are placed on the levees out in the rice fields and there is not enough vegetation to conceal them until June. I have also found nests in the reeds and grasses on the so-called "floating islands" in the lake but most of them are built in the rice fields or near small ponds on the prairie. They are composed almost entirely of rushes and grasses with practically no downy lining.

In July and August when the rice is in "the milk," that is to say when the kernels are soft and juicy, this duck wreaks havoc in the rice fields. The plant is bent over by the weight of the bird's body and the "head" containing the grains completely nibbled off. When it is taken into account that a flock of a thousand or more may descend into a field in one night some idea may be gained of the heavy damage resulting. The largest numbers are to be seen in the late fall just before the southward migration. This is after the beginning of the shooting season and as the bird subsists almost entirely on rice, the flesh should be unusually palatable. Nevertheless it is rarely shot by sportsmen as it is not looked upon as a "gamey" quarry. Unwary, moving in flocks of hundreds, it is regarded as an unworthy target.—J. J. CARROLL, *Houston, Texas.*

**The Black Duck in Oregon.**—Because of the somewhat uncertain status of *Anas rubripes* in Oregon, it seems desirable to record a specimen of this species, banded at Lake Malheur, on November 14, 1930, by U. S. Reservation Protector George M. Benson. The bird was marked with Biological Survey band No. B601081. It has not yet been reported as a return.

Although there is a possibility that the bird was an "escape" from some zoological park or game farm on the Pacific coast, it is interesting to note that in 1887, George Law, in a glowing account of the game birds of Sauvie's Island, Oregon, which was published in *American Field*,<sup>1</sup> included the Black Duck as one of the species of waterfowl that might be found in November in the bag of a sportsman.—FREDERICK C. LINCOLN, *Biological Survey, Washington, D. C.*

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<sup>1</sup> Vol. XXVIII, p. 174.