

Other observers have given us estimates which varied from 4,000 minimum to 25,000 maximum. Personally we are inclined to believe that the true figures lie somewhere between 5,000 and 10,000, of which numbers some 200 to 250 met their death by going over Niagara's cataract.

Notwithstanding a great deal of speculation and discussion on the part of local eye-witnesses, newspaper correspondents, and others, regarding the possibility of scaring the birds away from the vicinity of the dangerous waters of the Niagara, nothing effective was done, because nothing apparently worth while could be done to get the birds away from the treacherous waters. Very fortunately a suggestion by someone to use the powerful illuminating lights at the falls to scare the birds away from the rapids was not acted upon for we have it on the authority of Mr. William Rapelje, chief operator of the lights, that they did not depart from their usual procedure on the night in question. He is of the opinion, which we heartily endorse, that any special playing of the lights on the upper rapids would have acted as a further fatal source of attraction, and confusion, to the already bewildered birds.—R. W. SHEPPARD, 1805 Mouland Avenue, Niagara Falls, Ontario.

Blue and Lesser Snow Geese Near Vineland, Ontario.—Although wild Geese had been seen and reported, in this region, for a couple of days previously, they were not observed in exceedingly large numbers until the morning of October 28, 1935. when Mrs. Gerald Nicklin, the wife of the postmaster at Jordan Harbour, telephoned me, about 8.15 a.m., to ask me to come to the lake immediately, if I wished to see thousands of Geese.

No time was lost in getting to the scene of action—about four miles from my home. In the lake, about half or three quarters of a mile from the shore, was a great flock of wild Geese, appearing like a long seething black line on the water. Before my arrival some gunners had fired, killing one bird, and wounding another, a white one, which was swimming by itself, widely separated from the main pack. The dead Goose was a small slate gray bird, of a brownish shade on its head, weighing an estimated four pounds. The bill and feet were black. It was an immature Blue Goose (*Chen caerulescens*). Meanwhile a skiff had been rowed out to the wounded bird, which was captured, and was almost certainly a Lesser Snow Goose (*Chen hyperborea hyperborea*). Mr. Nicklin gave me the following particulars—length twenty-four inches; colour white, except flight feathers which were black, bill pink, inner part black; feet pink.

The great flock, whose numbers one could not estimate from the shore, had all this time been swimming eastward. After picking up the wounded bird, the skiff worked its way down toward the flock, apparently with the object of driving the Geese back to the gunners on shore. They were not very successful in doing this, but did succeed in agitating the great congregation of Geese, and from it large flocks would rise, some to settle again among those on the water, and others, consisting of perhaps three or four hundred birds, to fly westward along the lake and toward the gunners at the mouth of Twenty Mile Creek.

An idea of the great numbers that were present may be gained, from the impression that was received of the resemblance between the sight of these many minor flocks boiling out of the large one and the painted back-ground of the Passenger Pigeon group at the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology. And with all this disturbance, the appearance of the main flock was little altered. Many white Geese were plainly visible. Mr. Nicklin estimated them as perhaps one to fifty dark (Blue) Geese.

As the flocks flew past us, headed over the mouth of the Twenty Mile Creek, the

white heads of adult Blue Geese were easily visible through my 6x binoculars. They were outnumbered by the dark-headed individuals. A few whites were also in evidence. The gunners fired as the birds flew over our heads, but no hits were made, and the birds veered slightly to the right and continued westward along the south shore of Lake Ontario.

The flock remained in the lake, near Jordan Harbour, for the next couple of days, and then disappeared. They spent most of their time about two miles out from shore, and, as the weather was quite foggy, not many were shot. As far as could be discovered, only about six were captured here, one white-headed and three dark-headed Blues, one fully white plumaged Snow Goose, and two of undetermined species.

At Beamsville and Grimsby, four and eight miles west of Vineland respectively, the same phenomenal flocks were seen at the same time. On October 27, two flocks estimated at 200 each had been seen flying overhead and on the 28th the large flock was present in the lake.

Mr. E. B. Murdock of Grimsby reported seeing "thousands" of Geese off the pier at Grimsby Beach and they kept coming from the east, along the lake continuously. He could see that some were white and some were dark. Mr. Edward Hand, fisherman, of Grimsby, saw the first arrivals well east in the lake on the morning of the 27th and estimated their numbers at 500 in each flock. On Monday the main flock appeared and he considered them to number 10,000. On the 29th there were lots around, on the 30th only two were seen. He saw three dead birds. One a white Goose, and two others Blues with blue and white heads, respectively.

Thus, in this section, covering ten or twelve miles along the lake front, the Niagara "fruit belt," there was great uniformity in the appearance and disappearance of great flocks of these unusual visitors.—W. E. HURLBURT, *Vineland, Ontario*.

Snow Geese at Harrisburg, Pa.—Four Snow Geese, all probably the Lesser (*Chen hyperborea hyperborea*), were seen November 18, 1935, standing on a grassy islet in the Susquehanna River at Harrisburg, Pa. One was a dusky immature. A few Ducks on their autumnal migration rested distantly on the river but the Geese had no relation to them. Richard May was the first to see and identify the Geese.—HAROLD B. WOOD, M.D., *Harrisburg, Pa.*

European Teal at Lexington, Virginia.—On February 1, 1936, I collected an adult male European Teal (*Nettion crecca*) at Big Spring Pond, seven miles west of Lexington, Virginia. It was in company with a female Teal. A pair of Teals, probably these birds, were seen at Big Spring on December 23, when a group of us were taking the Christmas census, but on that and on several subsequent occasions were passed by with only a glance, although I have been watching for this bird for years. When on January 30 I happened to take a real look at them I saw at once that the male was not *carolinense* but *crecca*. The absence of the bar before the wing and the presence of the creamy-white scapular stripe were very noticeable. And at fifty yards in sunlight even the extent of the buff lines in the face and the coarseness of the vermiculation on the sides could be detected. The collecting of the specimen bore out the field identification and Dr. H. C. Oberholser who examined it confirmed the identification. The bird was found to be very fat.

This seems to be the first actual record for Virginia, since, as Dr. Oberholser writes me, a Potomac River record (1885) is strictly speaking "a record from Maryland, although it has commonly been accredited to Virginia." It is apparently the fourth record for the South, there being a recent record from each of the Carolinas.—J. J. MURRAY, *Lexington, Va.*