

Other investigators have reported deaths of incubating Wood Duck hens in conjunction with nest predation, primarily by raccoons (*Procyon lotor*) (Grice and Rogers, Massachusetts Div. Fish and Game, Fed. Aid Proj. W-19-R, 1965; Cunningham, Southeast Assoc. Game and Fish Comm. 22:145-155, 1968; Beshears, Alabama Dept. Conserv. and Nat. Resour., Fed. Aid Proj. W-35, Job I-F, 1974). Only 1 instance of a black rat snake killing an incubating Wood Duck hen was found in the literature (Hester and Dermid, *The World of the Wood Duck*, J. P. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1973).

The 3 Wood Duck deaths attributed to black rat snakes in my study (1973-1975) represented 4% of all Wood Duck nests initiated (N = 76) on the study area. The death of an incubating hen has a greater potential impact on the population than the loss of a clutch or the loss of individual hatchlings because that hen can make no further contribution to the population. Black rat snake predation on incubating Wood Duck and Hooded Merganser hens and nests could have a significant impact on the reproductive success of populations using natural cavities in southeastern river swamp ecosystems.

This study was supported under contract EY-76-C-09-0819 between the United States Department of Energy and the University of Georgia. This is technical contribution No. 1668, South Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station, Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina.—T. T. FENDLEY, *Dept. Entomology; Fisheries and Wildlife, Clemson Univ., Clemson, South Carolina 29631. Accepted 1 Sept. 1979.*

*Wilson Bull.*, 92(4), 1980, p. 527

**Sandhill Cranes nesting in Illinois.**—On 24 May 1979 at 13:30, I flushed a pair of Sandhill Cranes (*Grus canadensis*) from a plowed field at Deer Lake, Antioch Township, Lake Co., Illinois. One bird flew a short distance away; the other walked towards me and stopped within 6 m of me. Both cranes were calling. The pair were brown, except for their gray necks and wing coverts. Two downy chicks accompanying the closer bird scurried away.

Deer Lake is a private hunt club consisting of 404 ha of open water, deciduous woods and marsh. The field in which the cranes were found was adjacent to an extensive cattail (*Typha* spp.) marsh. The owner of the property has noted the presence of a pair of cranes during the last 3 summers, but saw no signs of nesting (W. Brook, pers. comm.). Several Sandhill Cranes have also summered at Chain of Lakes State Park about 13 km southwest of Deer Lake, but again no actual evidence of nesting has been observed (D. Johnson, pers. comm.).

Although Sandhill Cranes were formerly common breeders in Illinois, my observations indicate the first definite nesting in the state since 1872. At that time a nest was found in Champaign County (Bohlen, *An Annotated Checklist of the Birds of Illinois*, Illinois State Museum, Springfield, Illinois, 1978:46).—JOEL GREENBERG, 922 Sumac Lane, Mt. Prospect, Illinois 60056. *Accepted 7 Aug. 1979.*

*Wilson Bull.*, 92(4), 1980, pp. 527-529

**A Mallard × Mottled Duck hybrid.**—Hybrids between Mallards (*Anas p. platyrhynchos*) and other species of *Anas*, are frequently found in the wild (Cockrum, *Wilson Bull.* 64:140-159, 1952; Gray, *Bird Hybrids, A Checklist with Bibliography*, Commonwealth Agricultural Bureau, Bucks, England, 1958; Johnsgard, *Am. Midl. Nat.* 77:51-63, 1967). However, reports of crosses between a Mallard and Mottled Duck (*A. fulvigula maculosa*) are rare.

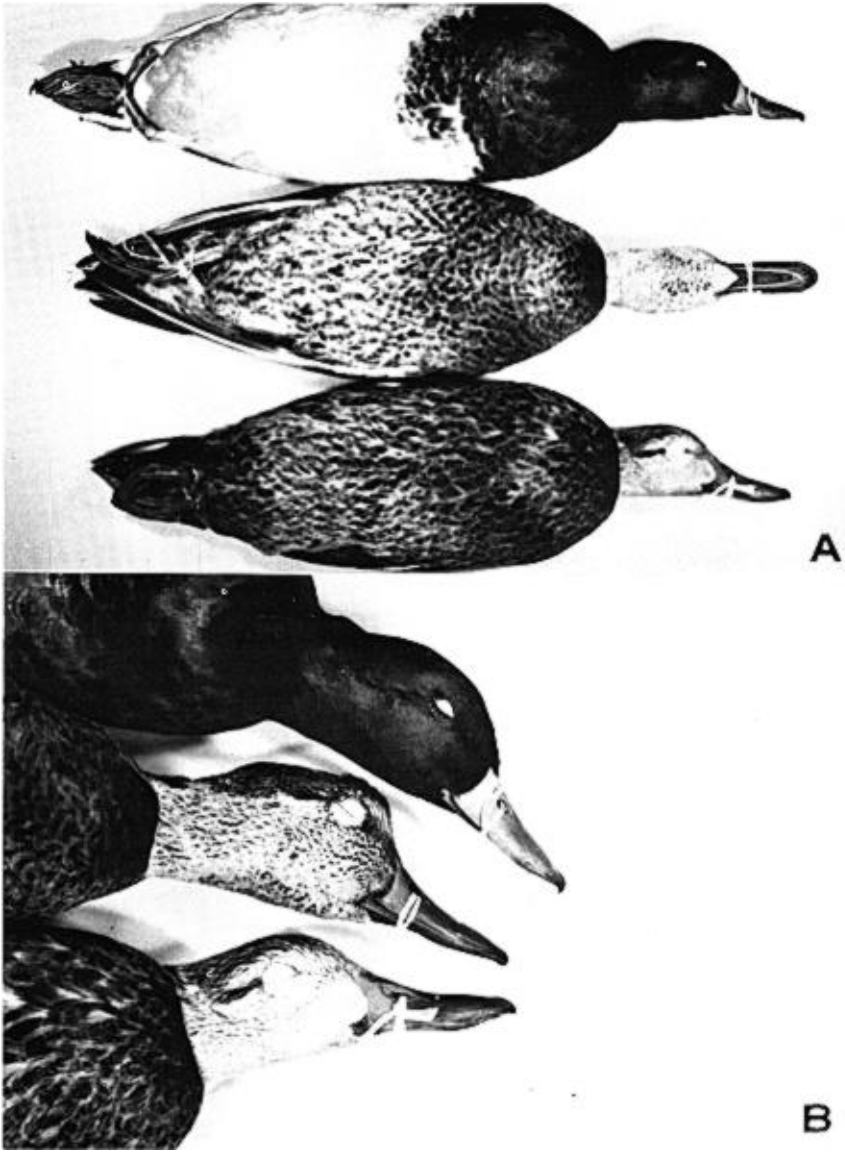


FIG. 1. A. Comparison of Mallard (WM #1286) (top), Mallard  $\times$  Mottled Duck hybrid (CCSU #123) (center), and Mottled Duck (WM #1315) (bottom). B. Comparison of heads.

A. V. Fitzgerald took a male duck at Tule Lake, Nueces Co., Texas, during the 1975-1976 waterfowl hunting season, which had traits of both a Mallard and a Mottled Duck. Tule Lake is a natural lake located in the southwest wind-tidal flat of the Nueces River flood plain.

Hubbard (The Biological and Taxonomic Status of the Mexican Duck, New Mexico Dept. Game and Fish Bull. 16, 1977) examined 4 Colorado specimens reported as Mexican Ducks (*A. diazi*) and believed these specimens to be Mallard  $\times$  Mottled Duck hybrids. Out of 383 pairs of Mottled Ducks in Louisiana, Weeks (Breeding Behavior of Mottled Ducks in Louisiana, M.Sc. thesis, Louisiana State Univ., Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1969) observed 2 pairs of Mottled Duck males mated with Mallard females and 2 pairs of Mallard males mated with Mottled Duck females. Phillips (Genetics 6:366-383, 1921) crossed a female Mallard and a male Mottled Duck and reported the plumage variations in the resulting birds. The  $F^2$  generation of this cross varied from pure Mallard-like to nearly pure Mottled Duck types. The plumage of the hybrid in my report is intermediate to plumage variations described by Phillips.

After preparation of the hybrid specimen, the bill color changed from a yellow-olive to a dark olive. This color change was also noted in other Mottled Duck specimens prepared for the Corpus Christi State University specimen collection. The prominent plumage features that distinguish the hybrid from a Mottled Duck are iridescent green behind the eye, numerous vermiculated feathers, a chestnut-tinted chest, recurved black-tipped tail feathers, and a subdued white bar on the anterior of the speculum (Fig. 1).

The prepared specimens were measured as described in Palmer (ed., Handbook of North American Birds, Vol. I, Yale Univ. Press, New Haven, Connecticut, 1962). The tail, exposed culmen, middle toe and tarsus measurements are within the range of both species. Measurements so broadly overlap that a comparison would provide no information about size differences. The hybrid wing (chord), 290 mm, is in the range of the Mallard, 271-297 mm, ( $\bar{x}$  = 282.2), which is reported to be larger than that of Mottled Ducks, 245-267 mm ( $\bar{x}$  = 256.8) (Oberholser, Bird Life of Texas, Vol. 1, Univ. Texas Press, Austin, Texas, 1974).

In regions of known or suspected sympatry, hunters' kills should be checked for Mallard  $\times$  Mottled Duck hybrids so that the status of hybridization can be monitored because it potentially threatens the existence of the Mottled Duck as a distinct species. In northeastern North America, Black Ducks (*A. rubripes*) hybridize with Mallards (Heusmann, Wildl. Soc. Bull. 2:171-177, 1974), thus similarly threatening the specific status of *A. rubripes*.

I express my appreciation to Gene W. Blacklock for preparation of the hybrid specimen and editorial assistance, and to Brian R. Chapman for his editorial assistance and use of the Corpus Christi State University facilities.—DAVID A. NELSON, Dept. Biology, Corpus Christi State Univ., Corpus Christi, Texas 78411. Accepted 18 Sept. 1979.