THE KING DUCK.

†FULIGULA SPECTABILIS, *Linn.*

PLATE CCCCIV.—MALE AND FEMALE.

This beautiful species rarely advances farther south along our eastern coast than the neighbourhood of the Bay of Boston. I have, however, been assured by old and trustworthy gunners that the King Duck, about thirty years ago, was by no means of rare occurrence there during winter, and that a few had been known to breed in company with the Eider along the coast. At the period of my arrival at Labrador, the greater number of the King Ducks had proceeded farther north; and although some were seen there, we found none of their nests. I can say nothing of the habits of this bird, which, although they may be similar to those of the Eider, must yet differ in many particulars, as is the case with all birds that are nearly allied in form. The eggs of the King Duck collected by Captain JAMES CLARK Ross, R. N., measure two inches and five-eighths by one inch and three-fourths, and have a smooth shell, of a uniform dull greenish-colour.

FULIGULA SPECTABILIS, Bonap. Syn., p. 389.

SOMATERIA SPECTABILIS, *King Duck*, Swains. and Rich. F. Bor. Amer., vol. ii. p. 447.

KING DUCK, *Fuligula spectabilis*, Nutt. Man., vol. ii. p. 414.

KING DUCK, *Fuligula spectabilis*, Aud. Orn. Biog., vol. iii. p. 523.

Male, 25; wing, $11\frac{1}{4}$. Female, 20; wing, $10\frac{1}{2}$.

Rare in Massachusetts during winter. Breeds from Labrador to the Arctic Seas.

Adult Male.

Bill shorter than the head, much deeper than broad at the base, somewhat depressed towards the end, which is broad and rounded. Upper mandible with a soft tumid compressed substance at the base, extending perpendicularly upon the forehead, and by a medial band of feathers divided into two broad lobes, the dorsal line beyond this descending to the unguis, then slightly curved, the ridge broadly convex, the sides sloping and convex, the edges perpendicular, with about forty-five narrow internal lamellæ, the unguis very large, broadly elliptical. Nostrils sub-medial, oblong, large, pervious, near the ridge. Lower mandible flattened, with the angle very

long, rather narrow and rounded, the dorsal line short and slightly convex, the edges with about fifty lamellæ, the unguis very large and elliptical.

Head large, compressed. Neck rather short. Body bulky and much depressed. Feet very short, strong, placed rather far behind; tarsus very short, compressed, anteriorly having a series of narrow scutella in its whole length, and a partial series above the fourth toe, the rest reticulated with angular and oblong scales; hind toe small, with a free membrane beneath; anterior toes longer than the tarsus, connected by reticulated membranes having a sinus at their free margins, the inner with a broad lobed marginal membrane, the outer with a thickened edge; all obliquely scutellate above; the third and fourth about equal and longest. Claws small, arched, compressed, obtuse, that of first toe very small and more curved, of middle toe largest, more depressed, and with a dilated inner edge.

Plumage short, dense, blended. Feathers on the fore part of the head extremely small, on the upper part very narrow, on the sides of the head very short, stiff and hair-like. Wings rather short, narrow, and pointed; primary quills curved, strong, tapering, the second longest, the first almost as long, the rest rapidly graduated; secondaries short, broad, rounded, excepting the inner, which are elongated, tapering, and curved outwards. Tail very short, much rounded, of fourteen stiff narrow feathers.

Bill flesh-coloured, the sides of the upper mandible and the soft frontal lobes bright orange. Iris bright yellow. Feet dull orange, the webs dusky, the claws brownish-black. The band of feathers separating the frontal lobes, and those along their upper and posterior edges, black; lower eyelid, and a forked patch on the throat, the same. The upper part of the head light purplish-grey; the hair-like feathers on the sides of the head pale bluish-green; the fore neck cream-coloured; the sides and hind part of the neck, a patch on the wings, and another on each side of the rump, white. The hind part of the back, the scapulars, the larger wing-coverts, and the secondary quills, brownish-black, the latter glossed with green; primary quills and tail blackish-brown. Breast and abdomen blackish-brown; lower wing-coverts white, the outer brown.

Length to end of tail 25 inches, to end of wings 23; wing from flexure $11\frac{1}{4}$; tail $3\frac{3}{4}$; bill from the base of the tumid part $1\frac{1}{4}$, along the edge of lower mandible $2\frac{5}{12}$; tarsus $1\frac{3}{4}$; middle toe $2\frac{1}{12}$, its claw $\frac{4}{8}$.

Adult Female.

The female differs greatly from the male. The bill is shorter, its tumid basal lobes narrow and not ascending perpendicularly, so that the forehead is low as in most Ducks. The feathers of the head and upper part of the neck are small, soft, and uniform. The colour of the bill is pale greenish-grey; the iris dull yellow; the feet dull ochre. The head and neck are pale grey-

ish-yellow, with small lines of brownish-black. The feathers of the back are brownish-black towards the end, with yellowish-grey edges, the scapulars brownish-red on the margins. The quills and tail-feathers are deep greyish-brown; the recurved secondaries broadly edged externally with yellowish-grey. The fore part of the lower neck and breast, the sides, and lower tail-coverts, have a central mark and sub-marginal band of brownish-black, the middle of the breast scarcely spotted, being of the general colour of the lower parts, which is pale yellowish-brown.

Length to end of tail 20 inches, to end of wings 17; wing from flexure $10\frac{1}{2}$; tail $3\frac{3}{4}$; bill from the separation of the lobes $1\frac{1}{4}$; tarsus $1\frac{8}{12}$; middle toe $2\frac{1}{2}$, its claw $\frac{4}{8}$.

THE EIDER DUCK.

+FULIGULA MOLLISSIMA, *Linn.*

PLATE CCCC.V.—MALES AND FEMALE.

The history of this remarkable Duck must ever be looked upon with great interest by the student of nature. The depressed form of its body, the singular shape of its bill, the beautiful colouring of its plumage, the value of its down as an article of commerce, and the nature of its haunts, render it a very remarkable species. Considering it as such, I shall endeavour to lay before you as full an account of it as I have been able to obtain from my own observation.

The fact that the Eider Duck breeds on our eastern coasts, must be interesting to the American ornithologist, whose fauna possesses but few birds of this family that do so. The Fuligulæ are distinguished from all other Ducks that feed in fresh or salt water, by the comparative shortness of the neck, the greater expansion of their feet, the more depressed form of their body, and their power of diving to a considerable depth, in order to reach the beds on which their favourite shelly food abounds. Their flight, too, differs from that of the true Ducks, inasmuch as it is performed nearer the surface of the water. Rarely, indeed, do the Fuligulæ fly at any considerable height over that element, and with the exception of three species, they are rarely

King Ducks
1. Male. 2. Female

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