

of California in 1896, and further that on July 10 of that year he was at the Coronados Islands near San Diego—where, moreover, Mr. Daggett himself has since taken the eggs of both the Petrels above mentioned. — WILLIAM BREWSTER, *Cambridge, Mass.*

**A Hybrid Duck.** — After ten years of hunting for real wild hybrids, the writer has finally succeeded in securing a drake which he regards as an even mixture of Mallard and Northern Black Duck. The bird was shot by the writer about a year ago, and he has waited some time for the experience to be repeated—as often happens after one has once succeeded in finding a bird or flower new to him—but I have caught no mate for my drake.

Several thousands of ducks have been examined in the hope, not merely of finding rare ducks in the market or in the strings of gunners, but especially for indications of a crossed breed. Often I have found 'blue bills' which could be assigned only with great difficulty to the species *Aythya affinis* or to *A. marila*. Especially was this true of females. Measurements have been found quite unreliable in deciding these cases, for it is a common thing to find a male of *A. affinis* which is up to the smaller measurements of *A. marila*, and often the flank markings are so indefinite, and the head iridescence also, that no one could say with precision what the bird was. Hybrids in these races are practically indefinable.

But between the Mallard and Black Duck we expected to find crosses, and also to be able to distinguish them with certainty. While it has been a common experience to come across Black Ducks which show traces of Mallard blood, as was Mr. Brewster's experience, I have been unable to find any Mallard which could be said to bear traces of a Black Duck infusion. It is true that these latter forms would be harder to distinguish, but the young drakes and females were carefully examined with the possibilities fully in mind.

These traces of Mallard blood we have found most common in the form recently described by Mr. Brewster as *Anas obscura rubripes*—birds which we have habitually called "Winter" or "Big" Black Ducks in this vicinity.

The hybrid here under notice exhibits strong Black Duck characters on the head, neck and back. The pattern and dusky shade of the Black Duck are also shown on all portions of the plumage, even where the Mallard affinities are strongest. Mallard blood shows strongest in the white frame of the speculum which is about one-half the typical width of white seen in the Mallard, in the light shade and wavy cross vermiculations of the scapulars, flanks and belly, in the blackish upper and under tail-coverts, and in the green of the nape and sides of the crown.

This specimen was in prime physical condition, an adult male with the testes unusually well developed considering the time of year.—ELON HOWARD EATON, *Rochester, N. Y.*



Eaton, Elon Howard. 1903. "A Hybrid Duck." *The Auk* 20, 64–64.  
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