

admit the influence of the tide, where it can obtain a plentiful supply of its chief food, the smaller univalve and bivalve shell-fish. It is in this country a regular winter visitant, and, except in very mild seasons, is numerous distributed along such of our shores as suit its peculiar economy. It seldom arrives before the end of October or the beginning of November; and its influx increases in proportion to the severity of the weather, fresh arrivals constantly occurring as the northern countries become frozen up. On the advance of spring, it again migrates towards the pole, advancing, for the purpose of breeding and passing the summer, to very high latitudes. . . . The Scaup is an excellent diver, and obtains its food by searching the mud beneath with its bill. It also swims well and swiftly; but its flattened shape makes it appear to be deeply immersed in the water. Its flight is strong, but not rapid; and the weight of its body and concavity of its wings compel it always to rise against the wind. It is a very wary bird, and appears to know the precise distance at which it is safe; from which cause, and the resistance given by its plumage, it is not easily killed. In confinement, it soon becomes tame, and, if provided with water, thrives well upon grain and other food eaten by poultry; and under this regimen its flesh is said to improve in flavour, and not to be inferior to that of the Wild Duck. It makes a hoarse grunting sort of noise, and has a singular habit of tossing up its head and opening its bill, particularly during spring, while swimming and sporting on the water." It is a beautiful sight," says Meyer, "to observe a string of these birds swimming on the sea, and especially to notice the usual manner in which they rise from that element. When one of the extremities of such a long body rises in the air, the rest follow as their turn comes; and thus they are, as it were, drawn up one by one from the surface of the water; and when pursuing their course, they continue to keep the same order in the air; on alighting, the same regularity." Richard Dann informed Mr. Yarrell that "the Scaup Duck, in its migration south, does not make its appearance on the western coast of Europe until late in the winter, and then only in comparatively small numbers; its migration appears to be more southerly than westerly. It breeds on the swamp and lakes towards the north of the Bothnian Gulf, near Lulea, in considerable numbers. I have shot the young there previously to their being able to fly. Being a diving duck, they avoid the reeds, and keep out in the open water. They are also numerous in the Dovre Fjeld mountains, frequenting and breeding near swampy solitary lakes as high as the birch-wood grows. At whatever season the Scaup is shot, it is generally very fat and heavy."

Eggs of the Scaup Duck were brought from Iceland by Mr. Proctor, who states that the bird is very common there, that it sometimes places its nest among the thick herbage and at others upon the bare stones by the edge of the freshwater lochs, and that it makes only a slight nest of a few stems of grass, but thickly lined with down, and lays from five to eight eggs of a uniform clay-brown, two inches and three-eighths in length, by one inch and five-eighths in breadth.

To show the wild and singular situations resorted to by this bird for the purpose of breeding, the following extract from some details communicated to Mr. Hewitson, by the late John Wolley, may be cited:—"I had not recognized the Scaup-Duck at all amongst the innumerable flocks and families of water-fowl I had seen on the Torneo and Muonio rivers in 1853; but many of the natives had talked of a large kind of 'Sorrti' (tufted Duck), which seemed to be this bird. Soon after the ice was washed out of the river at Muonioniska last spring, I commenced an 'upping' towards the mountains of the Norwegian frontier. After about a week's punting and towing we came to the head quarters of the Scaup-Duck . . . the wider and stiller parts of the river were studded with pairs of this conspicuous bird. At the remote peasant's house called 'Nyimakka' I examined several, which had been caught on artificial floating islets, where the birds get entangled in snares as they climb up to rest and plume themselves. On a little moor at the head of a quiet reach of the river, just where a fierce torrent swept into it, I found a nest which an ermine had lately ransacked; but the favourite little islands where they regularly breed were not yet quite free from snow. Some ten days later, when there should have been eggs upon these islands, they were mostly under water from the unusually high floods, caused by the sudden melting of the snow in the mountains; and the real danger for our lives, as we tossed down the rocky rapids, did not allow us to think of many promising shots."—*Eggs of British Birds*, vol. xi. p. 427.

In Lapland Mr. Wheelwright found the Scaup Duck not uncommon, and he often met with them breeding, both in the low grounds and on the fell-meadows.

The following is a description of the colouring of the soft parts soon after death:—

Male.—Bill, rich leaden blue, with a black nail; irides fine yellow; tarsi and toes light greyish olive, darker or blackish on the joints; the interdigital membranes were also inclined to black.

Female.—Bill leaden black, crossed by a band of grey near the tip; irides, legs, and feet as in the male; weight 2 lbs. 7 oz.

The Plate represents the two sexes, of the size of life.