

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE FULVOUS TREE DUCK

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The recent sudden and dramatic appearance of Fulvous Tree Ducks (*Dendrocygna bicolor*) in New Jersey and other northeastern states has aroused considerable interest. During the last half century or so the Fulvous Tree Duck has expanded its range in the southern states, and only time will tell whether the more northerly occurrences of late 1961 are omens of still further range extension.

On a world-wide basis the Fulvous Tree Duck has one of the most unusual ranges of any species of bird. The five main populations are found in widely separated regions: southwestern North America, eastern Africa, India, and two areas of South America. In each of these regions the Fulvous Tree Duck is restricted to favorable habitat and is usually only locally abundant. In India it is found chiefly in the Ganges Valley. There is little evidence of the species being migratory there, although Fulvous Tree Ducks do occur in the Central Provinces during the monsoon season. The eastern Africa range includes the Nile Valley, the lake areas of Abyssinia, and many of the other various rivers and lakes. The Fulvous Tree Duck is found also in Madagascar. There are African records for specimens collected outside the usual range. While there is some movement, information on a set migration pattern is incomplete.

One of the South American breeding ranges encompasses the Buenos Aires area, and this population appears somewhat migratory, wintering in northern Argentina. Fulvous Tree Ducks are apparently also found at various separated and favored localities along the entire eastern coast from Argentina to the Guianas. There is no center of abundance for the northern South America population. The records come from many locations, including the larger rivers of Venezuela and the tropical zone of Colombia. A very unusual record comes from Lake Junin, Peru, at an altitude of over 11,000 feet. The species has been collected in Panama in the west and has been known to breed in Trinidad in the east.

Last, and closest to home, is our southwestern Tree Duck population. The breeding range extends from central and southern California, Baja California, central Nevada, and southern Arizona south to central Mexico and along the Gulf Coast of Mexico and Texas into southwestern Louisiana. The species is absent, however, from much of Texas and north central Mexico.

The range extension of the Fulvous Tree Duck has gained momentum in recent years. The species was mentioned as merely casual in Louisiana in the A.O.U. Checklist of 1910, but it is now rather common in the southwestern portion of that state. There was an almost phenomenal concentration of 8,000 Fulvous Tree Ducks in that area in November, 1949. In very recent

years the bird has become quite regular in Florida in the autumn, and there are many records for that state in addition to those shown below.

Usually by mid-November the Texas birds, and the Louisiana birds as well, have migrated south to southern Mexico, Guatemala, and Honduras. As might be expected, however, winter records in the southern states are increasing. There were apparently only three Christmas Count records, involving a total of 26 birds, prior to 1960 (in 1952, 1956, and 1959). There were three Count records in 1960, and apparently nine in 1961 (six in Florida, two in Texas, and, most amazing of all, one in Rhode Island).

The following tabulation shows the increasing number of records considered out-of-range. We await further developments with much interest.

PRIOR TO 1956

<i>Locality</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Date</i>
Okanagan, Washington	1 shot	about 1861
Currituck Sound, N.C.	1 shot	July, 1886
New Albany, Missouri	1 shot	fall, 1890
Bermuda	1 shot	October, 1900
Vancouver Island, B.C.	5 shot (flock 11)	September, 1905
Gray's Harbor, Wash.	1 shot (flock 10)	December, 1905
Southwestern Minn.	2 seen	May, 1929
Pensacola, Fla.	3 seen	summer, 1931
Lake Okeechobee, Fla.	3 shot	December, 1939
Port St. Joe, Fla.	1 seen	September, 1943
Cuba (first West Indies rec)	2 shot	December, 1943
Southern Pines, N.C.	2 seen	April, 1949
Cape Sable, Fla.	1 seen	February, 1950
Lonake, Ark.	51 seen	October, 1950
Colleton Co., S.C.	1 shot (flock 4)	December, 1955
1956 - 1960		
Florida	sizeable flocks	1956
North Carolina	sizeable flocks	1956
Melbourne, Fla.	1 shot	December, 1957
Currituck Co., N.C.	1 shot	November, 1959
Savannah River Ref., S.C.	32 seen	December, 1959
Savannah River Ref., S.C.	1 seen	April, 1960
Wilmington, N.C.	3 seen	January, 1960
Wilmington, N.C.	2 seen	March, 1960
Cuba	2 shot	February, 1960
Williamsburg, Va.	1 seen	March, 1960
Indianapolis, Ind.	1 seen	May-July, 1960
North Carolina	55 seen	October, 1960
Loxahatchee, Fla.	65-75 seen	November, 1960
Lake Harbor, Fla.	15 seen	December, 1960
Cocoa, Fla.	4 shot (flock 20)	December, 1960
Puerto Rico	some shot (flock 20)	December, 1960
Mattamuskeet, N.C.	3 shot (flock 9)	December, 1960
Back Bay, Va.	7 shot	winter, 1960-61

	1961	
Loxahatchee, Fla.	37 seen	January
Brunswick, Ga.	1 seen	March-April
Virginia Beach, Va.	21 seen	January
Chincoteague, Va.	1 seen	April-May
Ocean City, Md.	1 seen	July-Sept.
Charleston, S.C.	many	fall
Brigantine Refuge, N.J.	6 seen	Oct.-early Dec.
Grand Manan Island, N.B.	4 shot (flock 21)	November
Little Compton, R.I.	4 shot (flock 30)	December
Augusta, Ga.	3 shot (flock 9)	December
Brunswick, Ga.	2 seen	December

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