

Collection of the American Museum of Natural History, New York City.

This collection of Labrador Ducks is by far the finest in the world, not only in point of numbers but in the quality and condition of the specimens. A portion of them have been recently remounted and formed into a group with characteristic surroundings, the whole forming an artistic and realistic object lesson. Three of the specimens in this collection came to the Museum with the collection of Mr. George N. Lawrence, which was acquired in 1887. Three of the others were once the property of Mr. D. G. Elliot, who informs me that he had them all in the flesh. The adult male he secured through John Akhurst, an old and very well known and highly respected taxidermist of Brooklyn; his adult female and young male he procured of the late John G. Bell, a New York City taxidermist of world-wide reputation. The National Museum collection was enriched some years since (1872) by the addition of an adult male from the collection of the American Museum, which was also a part of the Elliot collection. Mr. Elliot states that one of these adult male birds was the last one taken in the vicinity of New York, and, as far as known, the last adult male ever taken.

♂ adult, No. 3739, from the Wied collection, Labrador.

♂ adult, No. 3738, from Mr. Elliot's collection, Long Island, N. Y., about 1862.

♂ juv. No. 3741, from Mr. Elliot's collection, Long Island, N. Y.

♀ adult, No. 3740, from Mr. Elliot's collection, Long Island, N. Y.

♂ adult, No. 45803, from George N. Lawrence's collection, Long Island, N. Y., obtained about 1842.

♀ adult, No. 45801, from George N. Lawrence's collection, Long Island, N. Y., obtained about 1842.

♂ juv., No. 45802, from George N. Lawrence's collection, Long Island, N. Y., obtained about 1865.

Mr. Lawrence informs me that he obtained his two adult birds from J. G. Bell, and the immature bird he purchased in Fulton Market, New York City.

Collection of the Long Island Historical Society, Brooklyn, New York.

♂ adult. "The specimen of the Labrador Duck presented by me to the Long Island Historical Society, was one of two specimens, both male birds, that I killed in November, 1844, at the

mouth of the Ipswich River, south end of Plum Island, Massachusetts Bay. I was paddling in my float or sneak boat, covered with salt hay, when I saw three of these birds, two males and a female, feeding on a shoal spot near a sand-spit. I shot the males, but the female escaped then. I killed her, however, later in the day, on the same spot. A male and female were given to John Bell, then a taxidermist, on Broadway, New York, and John Akhurst mounted the fine male I gave the Historical Society." —NICOLAS PIKE.

Collection of Mr. Gordon Plummer, Boston, Mass.

♂ *juv.* "October, 1890. I sold my Labrador Duck about one month since to Mr. Gordon Plummer, of Boston, Mass." —HENRY F. ATEN, M. D.

"I have in my collection one specimen of the Labrador Duck, young ♂. The only data I have are from Dr. Aten. He procured it of John Bell, who mounted it, some fifteen or twenty years since. Bell had it in his possession some years before Dr. Aten got it. It was found in Fulton Market, New York City, by Bell, who secured two at that time, and Dr. Aten thinks Bell found it among a lot of Old Squaws which came from Long Island, N. Y. My specimen is in excellent condition and acquiring full plumage, I should judge." —GORDON PLUMMER.*

Collection of Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, N. Y.

♂ *adult*, from the collection of J. P. Giraud, Jr. This specimen is a finely mounted, full plumaged, male bird. That it is from Long Island, as stated in the Rowley List, there is absolutely no proof, although it is highly probable, as the greater portion of Mr Giraud's life-long ornithological work was done on Long Island. The compiler visited the Vassar collection and through the courtesy and with the aid of Prof. William B. Dwight, examined the whole Giraud collection and all the manuscript and lists connected with it, but could find no data concerning the specimen of the Labrador Duck. Professor Dwight subsequently visited Mrs. Giraud, the widow of the donor of the collection, who willingly placed at his disposal all the ornithological papers in her possession that were left at the death of her husband. Unfortunately nothing was found that threw any light on the subject.

*This is the "Dr. Aiken" specimen in the Rowley List.

In the Rowley List the Vassar collection is also credited with the possession of an adult female Labrador Duck. This is unfortunately not a fact. There is no evidence of any kind indicating that there ever was but one Labrador Duck in the Giraud collection.

Correspondence by Prof. Dwight with Mrs. Tenney, the widow of Professor Sanborn Tenney, his predecessor in charge of the Vassar collection, elicited only the statement that "it is out of the question to suppose that Prof. Tenney could ever have exchanged so valuable a bird as the Labrador Duck from the collection." Prof. Dwight concludes with the following note: "I seem, therefore, to have exhausted all known sources of personal or documentary information. So as it stands, our official list, clearly made out, credits the College with only one specimen, the male. The Rowley List credits the College with two specimens. In the absence of corroborative evidence for the Rowley List, and of only the fact that one specimen alone now exists in the collection, the presumption is entirely in favor of a clerical error in the Rowley List, or of an error on the part of the informant. It is certain that Vassar College is not given to 'exchanges,' certainly not of its valuable birds which were given by Giraud to remain as far as possible a *complete* representation. We have had offers of purchase or exchange at high prices, but have uniformly and immediately declined."

Collection of the University of the State of New York, New York State Museum, Albany.

♂ *adult*. "The male Labrador Duck (Pied Duck) listed on page 38 of the Catalogue of the De Rham Collection (4th Ann. Report) is still in our collection, but we have no data concerning it. For information concerning the De Rham collection I refer you to the 3d and 4th Annual Reports of the State Cabinet."

♀ *adult*. "The other specimen of Labrador Duck in our collection is a female, and after a careful search into its history I have come to the conclusion that it was in the State Cabinet when De Kay prepared his report on Birds.* Our Annual Reports record but two Labrador Ducks, viz., the male in the De Rham collection, and one specimen (sex not stated) catalogued in the 1st

*Zoology of New York. Part 2, Birds. By James E. De Kay. Albany, 1844, p. 326.

Ann. Rept., p. 20, 1848. I think this latter specimen must be the female alluded to above, and as it was in the collection in 1848, only five years after the publication of De Kay's Birds, I think he must have referred to this specimen when he quoted the State Collection (Birds, p. 326).”—WILLIAM B. MARSHALL, *Ass't Zoologist*.

Collection of Mr. Charles B. Cory, Boston, Mass.

♂ *adult* and ♀ *adult*. “I have only two in my private collection, an adult ♂ and ♀, in full plumage. They were killed somewhere between 1857 and '60, and were in George A. Boardman's collection, and were sold to me, by him, some ten years since.”—C. B. CORY.

“I sold my Labrador Ducks to Mr. C. B. Cory. They were shot at Grand Manan a good many years ago, when they were not considered very rare or of much importance. I think they were sent to me by Mr. Isaac Newton, in the spring.”—GEORGE A. BOARDMAN.

Collection of the University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont.

♂ *adult*.—In the Rowley List this collection is credited with two specimens, both from Long Island. Mr. G. H. Perkins, Professor of Natural History in the Vermont University, has furnished the following information regarding the specimens of this species in their collection: “The Museum of the University has not a pair of Labrador Ducks, but only the male, a very fine and well mounted specimen. It came in a collection made by a gentleman in New York, through Prof. S. F. Baird. I have searched all the documents in existence concerning the Labrador Duck and what I find is a Smithsonian Check List headed by a note in Professor Baird's handwriting: ‘A List of Birds in collection of Ed. Dunham, purchased for University of Vermont.’ On this list the species are checked and sex and age noted. The ‘male adult’ is the only note against the Labrador Duck, and I think this was all that was included in the list and the only specimen we ever had. How we were credited with a pair I do not understand. Professor Baird told me once that most of our birds were collected on Long Island, but where this particular species was taken I do not know. In general I understand that all ducks in this collection, not otherwise named, are from Long Island.”

Subsequently the compiler called the attention of Mr. George N. Lawrence to the above statement, with a view of ascertaining the identity of Mr. Dunham, the original owner of the collection. Fortunately Mr. Lawrence was able to furnish the desired information, which is as follows: "The specimen in the Vermont University is undoubtedly that of the Philip Brasher collection, which they have entire. Professor Baird asked me about the collection that was bought from Mr. Dunham and queried whether it was the one originally owned by Mr. Brasher. I enquired of Mr. John Akhurst of Brooklyn, and learned from him that Mr. Brasher did not want it known that he had parted with his collection and for that reason sold it under another name. He assisted in packing it at Mr. Brasher's house and knew it went from there to the Burlington College." Mr. Brasher was a resident of Brooklyn, an intimate friend of Mr. Giraud, who in the introduction to his 'Birds of Long Island' takes occasion to say that he had made use of the valuable cabinet of Mr. Brasher in the preparation of his work. It is therefore safe to assume almost positively that the location designated for this specimen is correct.

Collection of the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, Pa.

"I have looked carefully through the collection and find three specimens, all mounted. Nearly all the specimens in the Academy collection are mounted, and were obtained a long while since, and have very few data attached to them. From several years' work among them, however, I can generally tell from the character of the labels, stands, etc., where the specimens were obtained.

♂ *juv.* "A young male, with a white throat, but with very slight indications of white on the breast, was procured by Dr. Thomas B. Wilson, through Verreaux, and was probably included in the collection of the Duc de Rivoli. This bird was presented to the Academy by Dr. Wilson with the rest of his collection. It bears a small label attached to the leg—'Anas—Amer. Sept.'—but no other data except a number on the stand, which does not correspond to any catalogue that we have.

♂ *juv.* "Another young male with more indications of white on the breast than the one just described.

♀. "These last two specimens are probably those referred to in the Rowley List. They are mounted in the same manner, on the same kind of stands, and were, I think, in all probability procured at the same time. From the character of the mounting I should think they were procured somewhere in this neighborhood, *i. e.*, Pennsylvania or New Jersey, most likely by Krider or Cassin, somewhere in the 'fifties,' but unfortunately they bear no data whatever, and I have not been able to find a record of their presentation. My suggestions as to the locality and date of collection are based on comparison with other specimens similarly prepared and which bear data."—WITMER STONE.

Collection of the United States National Museum, under direction of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C.

"I send you herewith a list of specimens of the Labrador Duck in our collection :

♂ adult—No. 1972, 'North Atlantic'; J. J. Audubon.

♀ adult—No. 2733, 'North Atlantic'; J. J. Audubon.

♂ adult—No. 61,300, 'North Atlantic'; Am. Mus. Nat. Hist., New York City.

♂ juv.—No. 77,126, Long Island, N. Y., Fall 1875. J. G. Bell.

"The first specimen of the Labrador Duck which actually came into the possession of the 'Smithsonian Museum' was obtained in January, 1872, from the American Museum of Natural History, New York City. It is true there were two specimens (male and female), inside the Smithsonian building before January, 1872, but they belonged to Professor Baird's private collection, which he considered his personal property while he lived. They are the pair figured and described by Audubon, and given by him to Professor Baird."—ROBERT RIDGWAY, *Curator, Dep't of Birds*.

It will be of interest in this connection to quote from Audubon:* "The Honorable Daniel Webster, of Boston, sent me a fine pair killed by himself, on the Vineyard Islands, on the coast of Massachusetts, from which I made the drawing for the plate before you."

Collection of Mr. William Brewster, Cambridge, Mass.

♀. "My female Labrador Duck is apparently an adult bird, and is in good plumage and condition. The skin came to me

*The Birds of America, Vol. V, 1842, p. 329.

bearing a label on which is inscribed simply 'Nova Scotia, 1857.' I bought the bird in April, 1878, of Mr. Bernard A. Hoopes, of Philadelphia, Pa., who informed me that he obtained it from William P. Trumbull, who in turn had it from 'a taxidermist in New York City.' This is all I have ever been able to find out about the specimen.—WM. BREWSTER."

♂ *juv.* "I purchased my second Labrador Duck from Dr. Thomas B. Heimstreet of Troy, New York, who bought it, with some other skins, at the sale of a collection made by Mr. George B. Warren of Troy. The skin bore no label whatever and I have been unable to find out anything about its origin, although I wrote to both of Mr. Warren's sons. The bird is evidently a young male, for the black markings of the adult can be traced in portions of the plumage, which, as a whole, is not unlike that of the female."—WM. BREWSTER.

Mr. Austin F. Park, an ornithologist of Troy, New York, who had seen and examined the above specimen, informed me that it "was a well-made skin, apparently of an immature male, and from the similarity of its make-up to that of several duck skins that were in the same collection, and that were labeled as from a taxidermist or dealer in the City of Quebec, Canada, I suspect that perhaps the skin may have been obtained from that place."

Dr. Heimstreet has furnished the following additional information as to how the specimen in question came into his possession, and also of its original owner, Mr. Warren. "The Labrador Duck which I sold to Mr. William Brewster in November, 1887, was from the collection of the late George B. Warren, who was one of the oldest residents and business men of Troy, where he was born, and where he died May 8, 1879, in his eighty-second year. Mr. Warren studied and collected birds as an amateur upwards of forty years, and had occasionally received ornithological visits from Audubon and Baird. At his death he left to his widow a few hundred nicely mounted specimens of birds, and many hundred bird-skins, embracing some of the very rare birds of America. In 1879 the widow presented most of the mounted birds to the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute of Troy, and disposed of a large portion of the skins to H. N. Camp, of this city, and myself. We divided the same between us, and I did not discover that I had the Labrador Duck in my share of the skins for many months."

Collection of the Boston Society of Natural History, Boston, Mass.

♂ *juv.* "In the above collection, which is under my charge, we have an immature male Labrador Duck. It was donated to the Society years ago by Theodore Lyman. No date or locality; supposed to have been taken on the coast of New England."—CHARLES B. CORY.

"The Boston Society specimen is a young male, very much like my Troy specimen."—WILLIAM BREWSTER.

Collection of Dalhousie College, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

♂ and ♀. "The only specimens I know of in Nova Scotia are a pair (male and female) in the possession of Dalhousie College, in our City. They were originally owned by Rev. Dr. MacCulloch, of Picton, Nova Scotia. He was somewhat of a naturalist and a friend and contemporary of Audubon, who frequently mentions his name in his work. Dr. MacCulloch made a collection of birds and willed them to Dalhousie College; they were in very bad order, and the only specimens of any value were the pair of Labrador Ducks which have been remounted."—THOMAS I. EGAN.

The following excerpts from a paper read before the Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science, May 10, 1886, by Mr. Andrew Downs, refers to the specimens in the Dalhousie College Collection:* "Dalhousie College Museum contains a very rare pair of birds which have now become extinct, the Pied, or Labrador Duck. Attached to them is this label—'Family, Anatina, Brisson; genus, Fuligula; Fuligula Labrador, Lath. Pied Duck. Male and Female. Very Rare.' I think the Dalhousie Museum very fortunate in possessing a male and female of this rare duck. I have been a close observer of the birds of this Province for 63 years, and I have never seen this bird in the flesh, other than a specimen given me by William Winton of Halifax, who obtained the specimen, a male, in the market."

Mr. Harry Piers, of Willow Park, Halifax, under date of November 1, 1890, informs me: "I was talking with Mr. Downs, the other day, and his views are still the same as expressed in his

* Transactions of the Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science, Vol. VI. pp. 326-327.

article. He knows of no other specimens in public or private collections in Nova Scotia."

REVISED LIST OF SPECIMENS IN NORTH AMERICA.

Collection of the American Museum of Natural History, N. Y.	Adult ♂	3
	“ ♀	2
	Juv. ♂	2
Collection of the Long Island Historical Society, Brooklyn, N. Y.	Adult ♂	1
Collection of Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, N. Y.	“ ♂	1
Collection of the University of the State of New York, Albany, N. Y.	“ ♂	1
	“ ♀	1
<i>Total in New York State</i>		11
Collection of William Brewster, Cambridge, Mass.	“ ♀	1
	Juv. ♂	1
Collection of Charles B. Cory, Boston, Mass.	Adult ♂	1
	“ ♀	1
Collection of Gordon Plummer, Boston, Mass.	Juv. ♂	1
Collection of Boston Society of Natural History, Boston, Mass.	“ ♂	1
<i>Total in Massachusetts</i>		6
Collection of United States National Museum, Washington, D. C.	Adult ♂	2
	“ ♀	1
	Juv. ♂	1
<i>Total in Washington</i>		4
Collection of the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, Pa.	♀	1
	Juv. ♂	2
<i>Total in Pennsylvania</i>		3

Collection of the University of Vermont, Burlington, Vt.	Adult ♂	1
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Collection of Dalhousie College, Halifax, N. S.	“ ♂	1
	“ ♀	1
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<i>Total in Canada</i>		2
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<i>Total known in North America</i>		27
<i>Total known in Europe</i>		11
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<i>Total known</i>		38

The Covert specimen, mentioned in the Rowley List, is not included in the above Revised List, as there are very good reasons for doubting its validity.

SPECIMENS RECORDED AND SINCE LOST.

“William Winton, of Halifax, obtained a male in the market. He gave his specimen to me; I gave it to George A. Boardman.”
—ANDREW DOWNS.*

“I obtained an old skin from Mr. Downs of Halifax but it was so eaten by mice and moths that it was destroyed.”—GEORGE A. BOARDMAN.

“I received a ♀ from Mr. Cheney, that had been shot in April, 1871.—HAROLD HERRICK.†

“The last one I know to have been taken was shot by S. F. Cheney, at Grand Manan, in April, 1871. It was given to Harold Herrick, who subsequently gave me the skin. I sent it to John Wallace, of New York to be mounted for Prof. S. F. Baird of the Smithsonian Institution. Not knowing its value, Wallace let some one get the skin from him and it was thus lost to the Smithsonian, as he could not tell who had it.”—GEORGE A. BOARDMAN.

“The female Labrador Duck I gave to Mr. Herrick was with some Old Squaws or Long-tailed Ducks when I shot it, and I think there were no others of the kind with it. This one had

*Trans. of the Nova Scotian Inst. of Nat. Sci., Vol. VI, p. 327.

†A Partial Catalogue of the Birds of Grand Manan, New Brunswick. Bull. Essex Inst., Vol. V, Nos. 2 and 3, 1873.

small shells in its crop. It dove to the bottom with the Squaws."—S. F. CHENEY, *Grand Manan, N. B.*, October 30, 1890.

"There was a nice pair in Barnum's old Museum, in New York City, that were destroyed by fire. I used to see them after they became rare and tried to get them for the Smithsonian Institution, but did not succeed."—GEORGE A. BOARDMAN.

The specimen recorded by Dr. W. H. Gregg, of Elmira, New York* has unfortunately been lost. Dr. Gregg informs me that the duck in question was shot by a lad December 12, 1878. It was found in a broad expanse of lowlands called the Buttonwoods. These had been overflowed by the Chemung River, during a freshet. The duck had been eaten before he heard of its capture: never saw or was able to procure anything but the head and a portion of the neck. These were preserved for some years. Recently while moving his collection to New York City he entrusted the packing of his specimens to another person, and as the head cannot now be found he suspects that it was thrown away with some moth infested birds as of no interest or value.

HISTORICAL NOTES.

"I recollect that about forty or more years ago it was not unusual to see them in Fulton Market, and without doubt killed on Long Island; at one time I remember seeing six fine males, which hung in the market until spoiled for the want of a purchaser; they were not considered desirable for the table, and collectors had a sufficient number, at that time a pair being considered enough to represent a species in a collection. No one anticipated that they might become extinct, and if they have, the cause thereof is a problem most desirable to solve, as it was surely not through man's agency, as in the case of the Great Auk."—GEORGE N. LAWRENCE, *New York City*, January 4, 1891.

"I believe this Duck is now extinct. My business is dealing in game, and I see many of the fishing people from Newfoundland: I believe if any odd birds were seen that I would hear about them. The name 'Pied Duck' is now applied to the Surf Scoter by many of the gunners from Labrador and Newfoundland."—THOMAS I. EGAN, *Halifax, N. S.*, Nov. 17, 1890.

"I have in my life shot a number of these beautiful birds,

*American Naturalist, Vol. XIII, p. 128. February, 1879.

though I have never met more than two or three at a time, and mostly single birds. The whole number I ever shot would not exceed a dozen, for they were never plentiful: I rarely met with them. The males in full plumage were exceedingly rare; I think I never met with more than three or four of these; the rest were young males and females. They were shy and hard to approach, taking flight from the water at the least alarm, flying very rapidly. Their familiar haunts were the sandbars where the water was shoal enough for them to pursue their favorite food, small shellfish. I have only once met with this duck south of Massachusetts Bay. In 1858, one solitary male came to my battery in Great South Bay, Long Island, near Quogue, and settled among my stools. I had a fair chance to hit him, but in my excitement to procure it, I missed it. This bird seems to have disappeared, for an old comrade, who has hunted in the same bay over 60 years, tells me he has not met with one for a long time. I am under the impression the males do not get their full plumage in the second year. I would here remark, this duck has never been esteemed for the table, from its strong, unsavory flesh."—NICOLAS PIKE, *Brooklyn, New York*, January 4, 1891.

"I began to collect birds about fifty years ago and wanted to get a pair of each species; I did not care for more. The Labrador Duck I procured without much trouble, and if I had any duplicates sent to me I did not save them any more than I should have saved duplicates of Scoters, or Old Squaws. I have no doubt but that I may have had others. I had shooters all about the coast of Grand Manan and Bay of Fundy sending me anything new or odd. Anything they sent to me that I already had mounted generally went into the manure heap. About twenty years since Messrs. John G. Bell and D. G. Elliot of New York wrote to me to try and get them some Labrador Ducks. I wrote to all my collectors, but the ducks had all gone. It seems very strange that such a bird should become extinct, as it was a good flier."—GEORGE A. BOARDMAN, *Calais, Maine*, October 16-29, 1890.