

hollow near the water. Some observers have stated that they rear two broods, one in May and one in September, but this is uncertain. Before pairing the males fight desperately, during which they make the feathers fly to such an extent as to cover the ground at the scene of combat, and this quarrelsome disposition is strongly inherited by the domestic race. The general color of the Musk Duck is black and white, not variegated, but in large patches; but we have also seen pure white, pure black, and a kind of blue dun. The feathers seem very loose, looking as if half had moulted and the rest were just ready to drop out; but the most peculiar and distinctive characteristics are about the head, the cheeks being naked, with a scarlet fleshy space round the eye and the base of the bill carunculated also with scarlet. The head of the drake is very large, and these appearances are in him far more conspicuous, and give to him, in conjunction with a peculiar leer we have never seen in any other creature with feathers on, an aspect almost diabolical. The drake is very large, having been known to reach ten, eleven and even twelve pounds, and is destitute of the curled feathers common to other ducks—again marking distinctness of species—but the duck generally averages only about six pounds, and we never knew one over seven and a half pounds. This again is characteristic of the variety. The flesh of the Musk Duck is very good when eaten young, but it does not lay nearly so many eggs as the common kinds. They are also awkward to keep, the temper of the drake being simply abominable. He persecutes every creature he can manage, and has been known to attack children; as to other ducks, he is fond of seizing them by the neck and holding them under the water till they are drowned, if in any way they rise his dander. We recollect well an old rascal which belonged to a relative, and was kept in a yard with some doorkings. The first time the drake attacked him the doorking cock showed fight, but was quickly discomfited, and after that the drake made the poor fellow's life a positive burden to him. His favorite mode of offensive warfare was to rush at the poor doorking like a battering-ram and knock him clean off his legs, trampling over him as he fell; and we often wished in a half-hearted way for a good sharp fighting game cock to teach him a lesson or two. For these and other reasons the Musk Duck can hardly be called a profitable variety."

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