

Canadian Natural History.

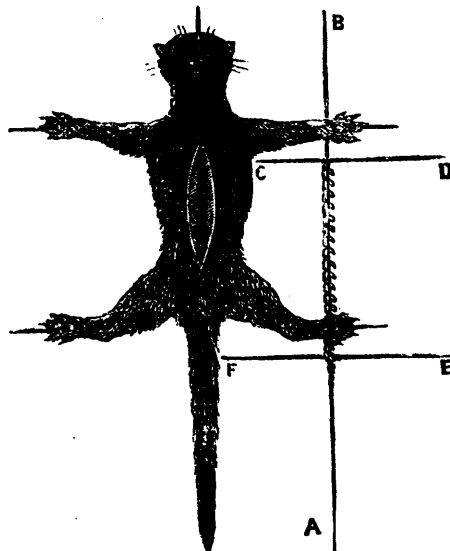
On Stuffing Quadrupeds.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—It will be remembered that in the number of your journal issued September 1st, I gave directions for skinning quadrupeds. I now propose to describe the method of stuffing them. Let us suppose the animal to be a cat. Take a central wire, which must be the length of the head, neck, body and tail of the cat, shown in the accompanying cut, that is, from A to B. Two other wires are then taken, and twisted round the centre piece in the manner represented in the cut, c. d. e. f., their extremities being left for the leg wires. After the wires are thus twisted together, the central wire is pulled out; and the feet wires of one side are pushed through the legs of one side from the inside of the skin, and the other two leg pieces are bent and also forced through the other legs, and then made straight by a pair of pincers. The centre piece, having been previously sharpened with a file, is now forced through the forehead and down the neck till it enters the centre of the twisted leg wires, in the position which it formerly occupied, and is then pushed forward to the extremity of the tail, leaving a small piece projecting out of the forehead, as represented in the cut; after which the completion of the stuffing is proceeded with. We will suppose the skull is now well rubbed with the arsenical soap, and all the cavities which the muscles before occupied are filled with chopped tow, flax or cotton, well mixed with preservative powder. The inner surface of the neck skin is now anointed and stuffed with chopped tow, taking care not to distend it too much. Nothing like pressure should be applied, as the fresh skin is susceptible of much expansion. Observe that it is always the inner surface which is anointed with the arsenical soap. And now having the neck stuffed, begin with the fore legs, and when they are both completed, stuff what will then be the under side of the centre wire; then form the breast, and continue stuffing the body until you come to the hind legs. Serve them the same as the fore legs. Observe that the wires in quadrupeds should be longer for the hind legs than for the front ones. Before finishing the body, stuff the tail; then finish the body, and anoint all the skin that can now be reached, and then with care sew up the skin, and if any hairs have been drawn in with the thread they must be picked out with a small awl. When this is completed, the hair will resume its natural order and completely conceal the seam. The articulations of the legs are then bent, and the animal placed on its feet. Pressure should now be applied over the places that are naturally flat, so as to make the other parts rise where the muscles are visible. A board is then prepared on which to place the cat. When you have decided on the position in which you intend to set your animal, bore four holes for the admission of the feet wires, which must be drawn through with a pair of pincers till the paws rest firmly on the board, and then twisted into a groove underneath the board, so that it will sit level. The stuffer next devotes his attention to the position and final stuffing of the head and neck.

The muscles of the face must be imitated as correctly as possible by stuffing in cotton at the opening of the eyes, as also at the mouth, ears and nostrils. The next care is the insertion of the eyes, which must be done when the eyelids are yet fresh. Some dexterity and skill are required in this operation, and on it will depend most of the beauty and char-

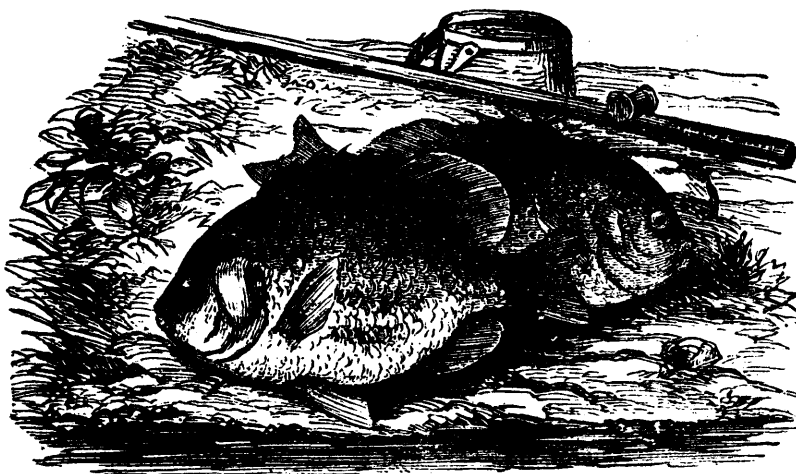
acter of the head. The sockets of the eyes are supplied with a little cement, the eyes put in their place, and the eyelids properly drawn over the eyeballs; but if rage or fear are to be expressed, a considerable portion of the eyeballs must be exposed. Draw the lips together, plug up the nostrils with cotton, well tintured with arsenical soap, to prevent moths from entering. The same precaution should be adopted with the ears, which with the cat require but little attention in setting.



The method of stuffing which I have pointed out in the above is applicable to all animals, from a lion down to the smallest mouse. Animals of large description require a frame-work suited to their dimensions. These will be pointed out in their order.

A. B. B.

— A canary bird, belonging to Miss Barber, of Windsor, Ontario, died August 30, at the remarkable age of fifteen years and two months.



Fresh Water Sun Fish.

Pomotis vulgaris.

THE common Pond Fish, or, as it is usually called in Canada, the little Sun Fish, is the last, least, and most numerous of the Perches that we propose to notice, having already described the more distinguished members of the same family, the various species of Bass. Our chief American piscatorial authority, Frank Forester, says of this small species, the subject of the accompanying illustration:—"This beautiful little fish has gained its provincial name from the extreme brilliancy of its colours when disporting itself in the sunshine. The numerous spots on its body have procured for it the absurd name of *Pumpkin Seed* in many States, and in Massachusetts it is known as *Bream*. It is valueless as an article of food, and equally so as a bait fish, its acute spines deterring

any fish from seizing it. It is, however, a constant object of pursuit to boy and lady anglers.

It has very many varieties, and a wide geographical range, being found from lake Huron, through all the Eastern States, and along the Atlantic coast as far south as Carolina.

Its colour is greenish olive above, with irregular points of red and broader yellow or reddish brown spots disposed in very irregular lines. It is marked also with ranges of brighter spots on the bluish operculum, and on the hinder prolongation of the operculum, a black spot with a bright scarlet margin.

Its body is much compressed, very broad, oval. Scales large and even. Forehead sloping to the snout. Lateral line concurrent with the back. Eyes large, circular, near the facial outline. Nostrils double; mouth small, with very minute, thick-set teeth on the maxillaries, palatines, and vomer.

Its dorsal fin has ten spinous and twelve soft rays; pectorals, twelve soft; ventrals, one spine and five soft rays; anal, three spinous and five soft; caudal, seventeen soft rays.

There is another well-defined species, the Black-eared Pond-fish (*Pomotis appendix*), which is distinguished by a large lobe-like black prolongation of the upper posterior angle of the operculum.

TWO SERPENTS AND A CAT: A SINGULAR CASE.—The *Messenger Algerien* relates the following curious story:—"A very singular occurrence took place in the warehouse of the Messageries Impériales at Stora. A large case containing two serpents, directed from Batna to the superintendent of the Zoological Gardens in Marseilles, was deposited in the warehouse for shipment. Whilst there a cat, ignorant of what the case contained, got into it. No sooner had it done so than the reptiles sprang at it with the rapidity of an arrow, and squeezed it to death in their immense coils. They then relaxed their hold, and commenced

the process of swallowing. The male serpent seized the dead cat by the head end, the female swallowing the tail end. It is well known that when serpents take into their mouth a substance of a certain size, the conformation of the teeth and jaws is such that they cannot let go their hold. In the present case both snakes were thus brought face to face, the process of deglutition was arrested, and it became doubtful how the matter would end. At length the female snake made a desperate effort to swallow the other, and in doing so was choked." In corroboration of the above facts the animals have been preserved in spirits of wine. The directors of the

Zoological Garden of Marseilles are going to bring an action against the Messageries Company for the loss of the serpents, whilst the owner of the cat demands that its skin at least should be given up to him as a matter of curiosity.—*Zoologist*.

WILD DUCKS.—Since the rigid enforcement of the game laws, the inlets and marshes of Burlington Bay are swarming with wild ducks, and owners of private marsh property are encouraged to form preserves. The *Hamilton Times* says that Mr. Wm. Gage, whose locality is well known to sportsmen, on one of the inlets of the bay, has about 300 acres of marsh land bordering his farm, which he is about to convert into a tempting resort for game, by seeding down a considerable portion with the wild rice, having prepared a supply of 600 lbs. at no small expense. The grain springs up from the water, and the heads have something of the appearance of oats, though much longer, the kernel being black in colour. It grows luxuriantly, and when once seeded, rapidly spreads over the adjacent marshes.