

or fourteen of these birds diving in a sort of semicircle towards a small bay or indentation of the shore. As they approached they made quite a noise by fluttering while on the surface of the water. They were driving before them a shoal of small fish. When they got the fish crowded together in the little inlet, they plunged down amongst them, and the slaughter began. I shot one of the largest of the birds; and when brought to land by my dog, I noticed a sucker about six inches long in his throat; I took him by the legs and gave him a smart snapping shake, and out came the sucker accompanied by five or six minnows about four inches in length. I continued the shaking process, and finally managed to bring to light no fewer than sixty-eight of the smaller fishes in addition to the sucker. Mr. J. T. Coleman, the city taxidermist, has informed me that he once captured a sheldrake which appeared to be in a dying condition, and found that the bird had swallowed a large mudpout, the lateral horns of which had pierced the skin on each side of the gullet and disabled him. I kept a sheldrake an entire summer, and after he had devoured, as closely as I could calculate, nearly 4,000 small fish, chub, rock bass, black bass, perch and sunfish, he dived out of existence in the attempt to bolt a rock bass as large as my hand. These facts go to illustrate the extreme voracity of this king of the mergansers. The merganser is a fearless bird, seldom turning out of his line of flight to avoid man, and, compared with other ducks, somewhat slow on the wing. The sheldrakes breed on the tributaries of the Ottawa River in considerable numbers. Like wood ducks they build their nests in hollow trees, although they are never seen perched on trees like the former. The young broods may be seen following the mother in the month of June. When pursued they dive and make for land, where they hide in the brush; whence they emerge again at the call of the parent bird. In contradistinction to the habits of the non-divers, the mergansers, excepting under the circumstances I have mentioned, never take refuge on land. The young sheldrakes, when well grown into the flapper transition, will skim over the top of the water at the rate of twelve miles an hour, rapids and chutes being but trifling obstacles in their way. The red-breasted merganser (*Mergus serrator*) is a very rare stranger on the Ottawa or any of its tributaries. It is a much smaller bird than the sheldrake. The male bird is black on the back and wings, with a red breast and