

neck of the Wood Duck is frequently seen covering the stem.

The Wood Duck is from 19 to 20 inches in length, and 28 inches in extent; bill red, strongly toothed, much hooked, shorter than the head, the feathers in front descending low, margined with black; head deep, glossy green; irides orange red; front crown and pendent crest rich bronze-green, ending in violet, elegantly marked with a line of pure white running from the upper mandible over the eye, and with another band of white proceeding from behind the eye, both mingling their long, pendent plumes with the green and violet ones, producing a rich effect; cheeks and sides of the upper neck violet; chin, throat, and collar round the neck pure white, curving up in the form of a crescent nearly to the posterior part of the eye; breast dark violet brown, marked on the fore part with minute triangular spots of white, increasing in size until they spread into the white of the belly; each side of the breast is bounded by a large crescent of white, and that again by a broader one of deep black; sides under the wings thickly and beautifully marked with fine undulating parallel lines of black on a ground of yellowish drab; the flanks are ornamented with broad alternate semicircular bands of black and white; sides of the vent rich light violet; tail coverts long, of a hair-like texture at the sides, over which they descend, and of a deep black, glossed with green; back dusky-brown, reflecting green above; below, dusky; primaries dusky, silvery-hoary without, tipped with violet-blue; secondaries greenish-blue, tipped with white; wing-coverts violet-blue, tipped with black; vent dusky; legs and feet yellowish red; claws strong and hooked.

The female has the head slightly crested; crown dark purple; behind the ear a bar of white; chin and throat, for two inches, also white; head and

neck dark drab; breast dusky brown, marked with large triangular spots of white; back dark bronze-brown, with some gold and green reflections; speculum of the wings nearly the same as in the male, but the fine pencillings of the sides, and the long, hair-like tail coverts are wanting; the tail, also, is shorter.

This beautiful bird is easily domesticated, and, it is stated, soon becomes so familiar as to permit one to stroke its back with the hand. A writer in the *Field* says: "My Wood Ducks, though pinioned, are not only unconfined by wire netting, but allowed to range at large in an open park, and on an open stream, without any fence or inclosure that would prevent them wandering over the whole country, if so inclined; they are, moreover, close to an unclosed wood of some five-and-thirty acres, but never wander far, and are seldom out of sight of the house. They also come at a whistle to be fed. They have had no shelter beyond that of trees and bushes for three years past, night or day, summer and winter, and, in spite of the frost and snow of Aberdeenshire, seem as contented in the one season as in the other. In the evening they generally wander rapidly over the lawns in search of slugs, insects and worms, which they devour greedily; they also appear to find a good deal of aquatic food in the bed and banks of the stream, and, with the exception of a small supply of barley brought every evening at a certain hour by the game keeper (whose coming they watch for with extraordinary punctuality) are left to shift for themselves. The Wood Duck evidently prefers the vicinity of man, and is, I believe, one of the most easily domesticated of ducks."

Mr. Lewis, in his *Practical Poultry Book*, says: "The late M. Vassar, Esq., of Poughkeepsie, (N. Y.,) reared the Wood Duck successfully for a number of years, and had them domesticated to such a degree as to permit a person to stroke them on the back with the hand."