

WILD-FOWL OF WILD-FOWL

deal alike. The Surf Scoter, whatever the age or sex, has a large, swollen sort of bill, whereas the bill of the other species is more like that of the Dusky or "Black" Duck.

Besides the Scoters, the Oldsquaws and Red-breasted Mergansers, or Sheldrakes, are the other two most common species encountered in this line-shooting, though various other Ducks are sometimes obtained. The other kinds, except the Eiders, are more accustomed to fly high, and will not mind decoys on the open sea. The Golden-eyes and Scaups, or "Blue-bills," are usually rather common. They ordinarily fly high and keep away from the boats. The Mergansers, too, like high flights, but often break this rule—to their sorrow. It is a very singular habit of some of these fowl when flying high over a gunner, upon his utterance of a shout or a shrill whistle, suddenly to check their onward flight and pitch or drop almost straight down, thus putting themselves in range of the deadly fusillade.

I wish I could adequately describe a scene which I witnessed on the old Pilgrim coast at Manomet one 5th of November. Flying gray clouds covered the sky. The wind was northeast, and increasing every hour. A few boats went out early but soon came in, as the seas were becoming dangerous. Low over the frothing ocean flew lines and clouds of wild-fowl, scudding from the north before the blasts. They were in sight all the time. Before one flock had passed southward, several more were to be seen coming, at times six or eight flocks in sight at once. By ten the rain began to beat spitefully on our faces as we stood on the bluff with