

usually, however the inside of a hollow tree is selected for this purpose. On the 18th of May I visited a tree containing the nest of a Summer Duck, on the banks of Tuckahoe River, New Jersey. It was an old, grotesque white oak, whose top had been torn off by a storm. It stood on the declivity of the bank, about twenty yards from the water. In this hollow and broken top, and about six feet down, on the soft, decayed wood, lay thirteen eggs, snugly covered with down, doubtless taken from the breast of the bird.— These eggs were of an exact oval shape, less than those of a Hen, the surface exceedingly fine grained, and of the highest polish, and slightly yellowish, greatly resembling old, polished ivory. The egg measured two inches and an eighth by one inch and a half. On breaking one of them, the young bird was found to be nearly hatched, but dead, as neither of the parents had been observed about the tree during the three or four days preceding, and were conjectured to have been shot.

“This tree had been occupied, probably by the same pair, for four successive years, in breeding time; the person who gave me the information, and whose house was within twenty or thirty yards of the tree, said that he had seen the female, the spring preceding, carry down thirteen young, one by one, in less than ten minutes. She caught them in her bill by the wing or back of the neck, and landed them safely at the foot of the tree, whence she afterwards led them to the water. Under this same tree, at the time I visited it, a large sloop lay on the stocks, nearly finished; the deck was not more than twelve feet distant from the nest, yet notwithstanding the presence and noise of the workmen, the Ducks would not abandon their old breeding place, but continued to pass out and in, as if no person had been near. The male usually perched on an adjoining limb, and kept watch while the female was laying, and also often while she was sitting. A tame Goose had chosen a hollow space at the root of the same tree, to lay and hatch her young in.

“The Summer Duck seldom flies in flocks of more than three or four individuals together, and most commonly in pairs, or singly. The common note of the drake is *peet, peet*; but when, standing sentinel, if he sees danger, he makes a noise not unlike the crowing of a young cock, *oe eek! oe eek!* Their food consists principally of acorns, seeds of wild oats, and insects.— Their flesh is inferior to that of the Blue-winged Teal. They are frequent in the markets of Philadelphia.

“Among other gaudy feathers with which the Indians ornament the calumet or pipe of peace, the skin of the head and neck of the Summer Duck is frequently seen covering the stem.

“This beautiful bird has often been tamed, and soon becomes so familiar as to permit one to stroke its back with the hand. I have seen individuals so tamed, in various parts of the Union. Captain Boyer, collector of the port of Havre-de-Grace, informs me, that about forty years ago, a Mr. Nathan Nichols, who lived on the west side of Gunpowder Creek, had a whole yard swarming with Summer Ducks, which he had tamed and completely domesticated, so that they bred and were as familiar as any other tame fowls; that he (Captain Boyer) himself saw them in that state, but does not know what