The CANVAS-BACK

The range of the Canvas-back includes the whole of North America except Alaska and the Arctic edge of the Continent. Epicures more than sportsmen have made this duck famous, not that it is not a noble game-duck, its size, wariness, and flying qualities are all of the first rank among ducks, and a Canvas-back probably takes a harder hitting load and straighter holding to bring him to bag than any other duck. But it must be fat to be a really good table duck, a thin Canvas-back is a poor thing, so good feeding grounds are essential if one wants to make the acquaintance of a Canvas-back at its best.

It has the reputation of being the fastest flying duck, but this speed is not acquired until the bird is well on the wing, a string of Canvas-backs driving across the wind, their long bills and heavy necks straight out, and the white plumage of the drakes flashing in the sun, is one of the pictures that lives in the memory of a duck shooter.

The REDHEAD

The Redhead has a decidedly more Southern breeding range than the Canvas-back, from Central British Columbia to Southwestern Keewatin and South to Southern Wisconsin and California, but its winter range is equally extensive. It is decidedly a local duck, certain conditions of feed are essential to its abundance, and taking it all round it is the best table bird among the diving ducks. Like the Canvas-back, Scaup, and nearly all diving ducks the winter ranges of the males and females are different, the former wintering well to the north of the latter. In Southern British Columbia the large flocks of Redheads that are found in winter on the ice-free lakes of the interior are almost exclusively composed of males, and it is not until February is well advanced that the proportion of females increases to anything like equal numbers with the males.

For illustration see next Page.

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