

*Slimbridge*

Mallard × Pintail	3
Mallard × Australian Grey Duck	2
Mallard × Philippine Duck	2
Mallard × African Yellowbill	2
Mallard × Red-crested Pochard	2
African Yellowbill × Common Pochard	2
African Yellowbill × Red-crested Pochard	2
South African Pochard × Chestnut-breasted Teal	2
European Pochard × New Zealand Scaup	2
Carolina Duck × Chiloe Wigeon	1

**THE BREEDING SEASON 1957**

by S. T. Johnstone

ABOUT 770 birds were reared at the New Grounds this year, representing some 75% of the babies hatched. Altogether, 91 forms laid, and of these 72 were reared. These figures are in each case the best we have obtained. In addition, 146 birds of 15 species have been reared by Major Mark Fisher in the first season at Peakirk—a most excellent effort on which he is to be congratulated. One feels that one must stress the undoubted help that the glorious weather of May, June and July gave to our effort, but a change in the method of feeding the young must be recorded. The usual soaked biscuit-meal was replaced by dry turkey starter crumbs. This would seem to have had a very beneficial effect on the ducklings, both on their survival and on the rate of growth; particularly was this so in the case of the Shelducks.

The manner in which baby waterfowl manage to hold on to their slender thread of life, despite the various and many methods of feeding and rearing to which they are subjected by aviculturists, makes one realise how unwise it is to dogmatise upon the precise method which should be used, but the 1957 breeding results would seem to suggest that we have evolved one satisfactory means of rearing swans, ducks and geese. Lest we feel too satisfied with our efforts, we must recall the failure of the Bewick's Swan to produce any young. The first clutch of five fertile eggs was spoiled by the pen being frightened from the nest by the visiting public. Unfortunately, the second clutch of three eggs was laid after she had sat through a full incubation period on the first, and was infertile. It is remarkable that a bird which normally breeds in the short Arctic summer should have re-nested at all under the circumstances.

The other major disappointment was the loss of nine of the fifteen Ne-ne goslings hatched—three from aspergillosis and six as a result of a gape-worm infestation. In this case the parasite was *Cyathostoma*, a larger and more lethal worm than the usual *Syngamus trachea*.

An interesting 'first' at Slimbridge was the rearing of three female Smew from eggs laid by the wild-caught female that we acquired in 1953. This species had previously only been bred, so far as we know, by Messrs Ronald and Noel Stevens at Walcot Hall in the 1930s.

TABLE I  
Breeding Analysis 1957—Slimbridge

Species	Number of Breeding Pairs	1st Egg	Number of Eggs	Clear	Added	Dead in Shell	Hatched	Reared	Remarks
Maggie Goose .. ..	1	6.4	15	2	1	—	11	10	2 females laid, mated to Red-breasted Whistling Ducks 2 hatched.
Wandering Whistling Duck ..	1	3.4	17	4	—	—	13	3	
Fulvous Whistling Duck ..	6	2.4	137	55	8	2	72	52	
Cuban Whistling Duck .. ..	1	6.5	6	3	3	—	—	—	
Southern Red-billed Whistling Duck .. ..	3	10.5	33	13	5	2	13	3	3 killed by hen
Black Swan .. ..	2	3.2	28	17	—	1	8	7	
Bewick's Swan .. ..	1	15.4	8	3	5	—	—	—	
Canada Goose .. ..	1	29.3	7	—	—	—	7	5	
Dusky Canada Goose .. ..	1	5.4	5	5	—	—	—	—	
Taverner's Canada Goose ..	3	11.4	18	12	—	—	6	6	
Cackling Goose .. ..	1	25.4	4	4	—	—	—	—	
Ne-ne .. ..	7	30.1	70	42	11	3	14	5	
Barnacle Goose .. ..	6	21.4	48	19	—	—	29	23	
Red-breasted Goose .. ..	5	16.5	31	17	2	1	11	10	
Swan Goose .. ..	2	3.4	28	15	4	2	7	5	3 hybrids 1 hybrid
Western Bean Goose .. ..	4	27.4	4	1	—	—	3	3	
Greenland Whitefront .. ..	2	12.4	11	7	—	—	4	4	3 hybrids. 1 crushed by hen
Lesser Whitefront .. ..	2	26.4	9	5	—	—	4	4	
Greylag .. ..	4	1.4	30	14	—	5	11	11	2 killed by hen
Eastern Greylag .. ..	2	16.3	12	2	—	—	9	6	
Barhead .. ..	5	26.3	35	28	—	3	4	4	6 hybrids
Emperor Goose .. ..	3	2.5	16	9	—	—	7	3	
Lesser Snow Goose .. ..	1	6.4	4	3	—	—	1	1	
Blue Snow Goose .. ..	1	12.4	12	7	1	1	3	3	
Greater Snow Goose .. ..	7	15.4	64	40	6	2	16	6	
Ross's Goose .. ..	7	25.4	23	7	3	—	13	13	
Cape Shelduck .. ..	2	10.4	13	4	1	1	7	7	

TABLE I—continued

Species	Number of Breeding Pairs	1st Egg	Number of Eggs	Clear	Added	Dead in Shell	Hatched	Reared	Remarks
New Zealand Shelduck .. ..	1	18.4	6	—	—	—	6	4	From eggs and ducklings sent in
Red-backed Radjah Shelduck ..	1	2.4	9	5	—	—	3	1	
Common Shelduck .. ..	1	1.5	2	2	—	—	—	23	
Egyptian Goose .. ..	1	10.3	14	2	—	—	12	11	
Orinoco Goose .. ..	3	17.3	40	13	1	1	25	19	
Abyssinian Blue-winged Goose ..	1	11.5	5	4	1	—	—	—	2 killed by hen
Ashy-headed Goose .. ..	1	15.5	6	4	—	—	2	—	
Ruddy-headed Goose .. ..	1	12.4	4	3	—	—	1	1	
Greater Magellan .. ..	1	15.3	15	3	1	—	11	11	
Cereopsis .. ..	3	24.12.56	25	9	4	—	12	7	
Andean Crested Duck .. ..	2	16.3	16	10	—	—	6	5	Hybrids
Marbled Teal .. ..	3	22.4	41	20	1	—	20	17	
Cape Teal .. ..	3	25.4	30	7	1	2	19	13	
Versicolor Teal .. ..	4	13.3	38	4	—	—	33	14	
Puna Teal .. ..	1	20.4	9	9	—	—	—	—	
Bahama Pintail .. ..	3	11.5	27	5	—	—	22	14	
Chilean Pintail .. ..	1	5.4	5	3	—	—	2	2	
Pintail .. ..	4	4.4	41	8	—	1	32	22	
Chilean Teal .. ..	1	28.4	5	3	—	1	1	—	
Australian Grey Teal .. ..	1	12.3	13	5	3	—	5	3	
Chestnut-breasted Teal .. ..	5	5.3	81	19	7	—	55	47	8 hybrids
Hawaiian Duck .. ..	2	4.4	13	1	6	—	3	1	
Florida Duck .. ..	1	3.4	5	5	—	—	—	—	
Mottled Duck .. ..	1	15.4	6	3	—	—	3	2	
North American Black Duck ..	1	25.3	17	3	—	—	14	3	
Indian Spotbill .. ..	1	22.4	9	4	1	—	4	1	3 hybrids
Australian Grey Duck .. ..	1	1.4	8	2	—	—	6	6	
Philippine Duck .. ..	5	6.4	54	17	7	—	28	22	
African Yellowbill .. ..	2	1.4	10	4	—	—	6	3	
African Black Duck .. ..	2	1.4	15	4	—	2	9	8	
Gadwall .. ..	1	12.4	11	—	—	—	11	10	
European Wigeon .. ..	3	13.5	25	7	—	—	18	15	



TABLE I—continued

Species	Number of Breeding Pairs	1st Egg	Number of Eggs	Clear	Added	Dead in Shell	Hatched	Reared	Remarks
American Wigeon .. ..	1	7.6	9	9	—	—	—	—	
Chiloe Wigeon .. ..	6	2.4	102	56	12	2	32	26	
Cinnamon Teal .. ..	4	27.4	41	13	1	1	26	10	
Andean Cinnamon Teal .. ..	1	23.4	4	1	—	—	3	—	
Garganey .. ..	1	5.5	9	9	—	—	—	—	
Red Shoveler .. ..	1	8.4	8	4	—	—	4	1	
Cape Shoveler .. ..	2	25.3	18	7	3	—	8	6	
Common Shoveler .. ..	2	1.5	16	12	—	—	4	4	
Ringed Teal .. ..	4	12.3	47	6	—	—	41	30	
Red-crested Pochard .. ..	3	13.3	42	22	2	—	18	13	
Rosy-bill .. ..	1	12.5	8	1	3	—	4	2	
Southern Pochard .. ..	3	4.3	16	4	1	—	11	5	
Canvasback .. ..	1	29.4	8	1	5	—	2	—	
European Pochard .. ..	2	21.4	12	4	3	—	5	5	
Redhead .. ..	2	20.5	11	4	—	—	7	5	
New Zealand Scaup .. ..	1	14.4	12	—	—	—	12	10	Hybrids
Tufted Duck .. ..	1	4.6	7	2	—	—	5	1	
Lesser Scaup .. ..	1	2.6	6	3	—	—	3	3	
Common Scaup .. ..	2	10.5	11	4	—	—	7	6	
Mandarin .. ..	7	3.4	81	21	2	2	56	43	
Carolina .. ..	8	4.3	154	79	4	14	57	37	
Comb Duck .. ..	1	2.6	12	4	2	—	6	2	
South African Comb Duck .. ..	1	15.6	11	1	—	1	9	1	
Spur-winged Goose .. ..	1	7.4	1	1	—	—	—	—	
Eider .. ..	2	20.5	8	4	—	—	4	3	
Barrow's Goldeneye .. ..	1	10.5	5	3	—	—	2	1	
European Goldeneye .. ..	1	15.4	7	2	2	—	3	—	
Smew .. ..	1	7.6	5	—	—	—	5	3	
Red-breasted Merganser .. ..	1	10.6	18	18	—	—	—	—	
Goosander .. ..	1	13.5	12	1	—	—	11	—	
North American Ruddy Duck .. ..	12	10.5	—	—	—	—	—	c. 40	Number unknown; all reared by parents

TABLE II  
Breeding Analysis 1957—Peakirk

Species	Number of Breeding Pairs	1st Egg	Number of Eggs	Clear	Addled	Dead in Shell	Hatched	Reared	Remarks
Greylag .. ..	—	10.4	3	—	3	—	—	—	Greylag mated to Canada Goose
Greater Snow Goose .. ..	1	1.6	1	1	—	—	—	—	
Egyptian Goose .. ..	1	7.5	9	—	—	—	9	7	
Lesser Magellan Goose .. ..	1	20.5	5	5	—	—	—	—	
Cereopsis .. ..	1	12.3	4	4	—	—	—	—	
Cape Shelduck .. ..	1	10.4	5	3	—	—	2	2	
Cape Teal .. ..	2	27.4	41	—	14	—	27	22	
Chilean Teal .. ..	1	10.4	12	8	—	—	4	3	
Bahama Pintail .. ..	2	3.6	18	9	1	—	8	8	
Pintail .. ..	1	10.5	9	—	—	4	5	5	
Chestnut-breasted Teal .. ..	1	29.4	14	2	—	—	12	10	
Chiloe Wigeon .. ..	1	20.5	2	2	—	—	—	—	
Philippine Duck .. ..	2	10.5	25	3	3	—	21	17	
Gadwall .. ..	1	20.5	4	—	4	—	—	—	
Cinnamon Teal .. ..	1	20.5	21	—	2	—	19	14	
Shoveler .. ..	2	10.5	18	—	—	9	9	9	Heavy hen broke eggs
Common Pochard .. ..	1	6.5	9	—	—	—	—	8	
Red-head .. ..	1	3.6	9	4	—	—	5	—	Hen killed ducklings
Rosy-bill .. ..	1	15.5	10	4	1	—	5	4	
Red-crested Pochard .. ..	2	4.4	22	2	6	1	13	4	
Mandarin .. ..	2	20.4	41	6	13	4	18	12	1 Mandarin mated to Spotbill and produced infertile eggs
Carolina .. ..	7	31.3	108	21	17	18	52	20	