

# AMERICAN BLACK DUCKS IN UTAH

4-1994 (a)

BY TOM D. PRATT

ABOUT 10 MONTHS PRIOR TO THE START OF WORLD WAR II, IN 1941, AN AMERICAN BLACK DUCK, FEMALE, WAS NETTED ON MUDDY CREEK, EAST HARWICH, MASSACHUSETTS AND A BAND AFFIXED TO ITS LEG.

SIX AND A HALF YEARS LATER, IN THE FALL OF 1947, THIS SAME BIRD WAS TAKEN ON OGDEN BAY, UTAH; ITS BAND, BY THEN, SO WORN THAT IT TOOK CHEMICAL ETCHING BY THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE TO DETERMINE THE NUMBER.

THIS IS THE FIRST, VARIFIED RECORD OF A Banded EAST COAST AM. BLACK DUCK BEING TAKEN IN UTAH; BUT NOT THE ONLY ONE. SIXTEEN YEARS LATER, IN 1963, ANOTHER BLACK DUCK, Banded IN TENNESSEE WAS TAKEN ON FARMINGTON BAY, UTAH.

THE OGDEN BAY BIRD WAS TAKEN BY MY FATHER, BROTHER & ME

IN AN EFFORT TO VERIFY MY MEMORY OF THAT EVENT AND THE LONG AGO LOST REPORT FORM SENT US, I CONTACTED THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE IN LAUREL, MARYLAND. AFTER MANY DEAD ENDS I FOUND THE FONT OF ALL BIRD BANDING INFORMATION, WHO QUICKLY FAXED ME NOT ONLY THE DESIRED BAND REPORT BUT A COPY OF MY BROTHERS OLD LETTER.

IN WORKING OUT PROBABILITIES WITH THE BANDING DIVISION IT IS LIKELY THAT, AT LEAST FOR THE YEARS 1947 AND 1963, 200 OR MORE BLACK DUCKS MIGRATED THROUGH UTAH.

BECAUSE OF THE SIMILARITY OF A BLACK DUCK TO A FEMALE MALLARD THEIR ANONYMITY COULD PRESUMABLY BE MAINTAINED, EVEN FROM LOCAL MARSH BIOLOGISTS, WHO <sup>OFTEN</sup> CHECK DAILY BAGS OF HUNTERS ON UTAH MARSHES.

FORTUNATELY FOR BIRD ENTHUSIASTS, THE TWO  
BANDED AM. BLACK DUCKS TAKEN IN UTAH AND  
POSITIVELY IDENTIFIED ADD ONE MORE POTENTIAL  
SIGHTING FOR WE LIST KEEPERS.



8-2-94

ELLA SORRENSEN,

ENCLOSED IS THE RENDERING YOU SUGGESTED. OUR SUMMER HOME ON THE UPPER WEBER LACKS A TYPEWRITER SO I HOPE YOU CAN DECIPHER MY UNKICKEN SCRATCHINGS. FEEL FREE TO EDIT OR SCRAP AS YOU SEE FIT.

IF YOU USE SOME SEMBLANCE OF THE STORY I WOULD APPRECIATE A COPY.

YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN SOME OTHER DATA I HAVE COMING; A LIST OF ALL BIRDS BANDED IN UTAH AND RECOVERED ELSEWHERE; A LIST OF ALL BIRDS BANDED ELSEWHERE AND RECOVERED IN UTAH; A LIST OF ALL AM. BLACK DUCK BANDS RECOVERED IN ADJOINING STATES TO UTAH.

IF YOU WANT COPIES OF THE U.S.F+W.S. ON THE TWO AM. BLACK DUCKS FOR VERIFICATION PLEASE ADVISE.

A COUPLE OF OTHER USELESS FACTS:

- a) TEN YEARS AGO, WHILE HUNTING, WE SAW AN ALBINO GREENWING TEAL.
- b) COMMON GRACKLES HAVE TAKEN UP PERMANENT RESIDENCE AT THE GREAT SALT LAKE MARINA.
- c) MY WIFE & I COULD ASSIST OTHER BIRDERS ON THE GREAT SALT LAKE NEARLY YEAR ROUND IN OBSERVATIONS OF THE ISLANDS OR WATERS. WE SPEND UPWARDS OF 6 WEEKS TOTAL OUT ON THE LAKE AND REMOTE ISLANDS BIRDING AND PREPARING A WILD FLOWER BOOK OF THE ISLANDS AND ADJACENT SHORES. WE COULD HANDLE 6 TO 10 PEOPLE AT A TIME

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