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Foraging dives by surface-feeding ducks

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Foraging dives by surface-feeding ducks.—Recently, R. I. Smith (1966. *Wilson Bull.*, 78:483–484) questioned, among other things, the occurrence of foraging dives by Pintails (*Anas acuta*). Foraging dives by mature wild Pintails have been repeatedly seen at the Wildfowl Trust since at least 1954 (Chapman et al., 1959. *Brit. Birds*, 52:60), and this species is only one of several "dabblers" that regularly dives for food there. Other surface-feeding species that we have observed diving for food include Mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*) (wild resident and wintering birds), Shovelers (*Spatula clypeata*) (wild wintering birds), African Black Ducks (*Anas sparsa*), and Bahama Pintails (*Anas bahamensis*). One of us (J.K.) has also observed foraging dives by New Zealand Brown Ducks (*Anas auklandica chlorotis*), Wood Ducks (*Aix sponsa*), and Mandarin Ducks (*Aix galericulata*); in all cases females of these species have been observed diving more frequently than males. Additionally, one of us (P.A.J.) has noted foraging dives by Gadwalls (*Anas strepera*), Cape Teal (*Anas capensis*), and Gray Teal (*Anas gibberifrons*). Of these three, the Cape Teal has been observed diving much more commonly than the others.

A number of published accounts of diving by surface-feeding ducks probably refer to "dashing-and-diving" during bathing (McKinney, 1965. *Behaviour*, 25:173–174) or to escape-diving, but others are clearly concerned with foraging. Thus, foraging dives by wild Mallards have been reported on several occasions (e.g., Mylne, 1954. *Brit. Birds*, 47:395; Kutz, 1940. *J. Wildl. Mgmt.*, 4:19–20). Wild Black Ducks (*Anas rubripes*) likewise have been reported to dive for food to depths of up to ten or twelve feet (Kutz, 1940. op. cit.; Wright, 1954. "High Tide and an East Wind. The story of the Black Duck.") Cottam (1945. *Condor*, 47:39) also reports foraging dives by these two species, as well as by male Shovelers. Foraging dives by both sexes of Shovelers have been reported (Dean, 1950. *Brit. Birds*, 43:19–20), and similar behavior has been noted in the New Zealand Shoveler (*Spatula rhynchotis*) (Black, 1959. *Notornis*, 8:118–119).

To our knowledge, there are no published accounts of Blue-winged Teal (*Anas discors*) diving for food, but Frank McKinney (pers. comm.) has reported seeing this among both adult and immature birds, particularly during August and September. We have found no record of foraging dives by Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*), and only one (Janssen, 1964. *Loon*, 36:141) for Green-winged Teal (*Anas carolinensis*), but it should be apparent that nearly all normally "surface-feeding" ducks might perform foraging dives occasionally. Incidentally, corroboration of preflight Neck-jerking (or "Head-thrusting") by Pintails is provided by McKinney (1965. *Behaviour*, 25:215), and Lorenz (1952. *Avicult. Mag.*, 58:12) has independently reported mutual precopulatory "Pumping" in Pintails.—JANET KEAR AND PAUL A. JOHNSGARD, *Wildfowl Trust, Slimbridge, Glos., England, and Department of Zoology and Physiology, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska 68508. 19 May 1967.*