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FIELD NOTES

Cinnamon Teal Sighted at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge: On the morning of April 1, 1974, I encountered three teal on a small pond near the southeast edge of the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge. This site is adjacent to a forested area which is part of an experimental green-tree impoundment operated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The impoundment lies south of N.Y. Routes 5 and 20 and is bordered by the Seneca/Cayuga Canal to the south, the N.Y. Barge Canal on the east, and N.Y. Route 89 to the west.

Approaching the pond from the south, bright sunlight illuminated the brilliant plumage of a single Cinnamon Teal drake (*Anas cyanoptera*). I had never seen this species previously, but its identity seemed unmistakable. Accompanying the Cinnamon drake was what at first appeared to be a pair of Blue-winged Teal (*Anas discors*). Further observation, however, revealed that the Cinnamon drake carefully and continuously positioned himself between the female and the Blue-wing drake, and frequently pursued the intruding Blue-wing whenever he approached too closely. Since the females of these two species are indistinguishable in the field, the possibility existed that a pair of Cinnamon Teal may have been present. No inciting by the female was noted. Opportunity for photographs was excellent and several photos were taken for documentation. I made the accompanying photo (Fig. 1) at this time.

I notified refuge personnel by radio and soon Robert Gustafson, Wildlife Biologist, Vern Dewey, Biological Technician, Rod Outwait, Maintenance Worker, and Mr. Walter Benning, who was fortunately visiting refuge headquarters at the time, arrived. The Cinnamon drake and his apparent mate were amazingly tolerant of our presence—much more so than Blue-winged Teal would have been under similar circumstances. During a second sighting, on April 3rd, the pair had moved to a small ditch adjacent to River Road about half a mile from the first sighting. Here, I was able to study the teal (pair?) at distances of as close as 20-30 feet.

In discussion with Mr. Benning and refuge personnel, it is significant to note one peculiarity about the Cinnamon drake that aroused our curiosity. Close scrutiny of the drake revealed the presence of a small white "dash" mark immediately in front of the eye. This mark was situated at the apex of a blue-gray, tear-drop shaped mask that encompassed the eye and tapered to the nape of the neck; it was very similar to the mask which appears on the Green-winged Teal drake (*Anas crecca*). The existence of such a marking suggested that perhaps a cross between the two species had occurred. To my knowledge hybridization between *A. cyanoptera* and *A. crecca* has not been reported in the literature.

A close examination of the color slides taken of the Cinnamon drake was made and compared with the description and color plates of the Cinnamon Teal presented in Francis Kortright's (1942) *Ducks, Geese, and Swans of North America* (see pages 210 and 415). The following discrepancies were easily apparent:

1. presence of white "dash" mark in front of the eye,
2. presence of a blue-gray, tear-drop shaped mask about the eye, tapering to the nape of the neck,
3. presence of black spots highlighting the cinnamon-red sides and breast, and
4. presence of a prominent dusty white to pink flank marking.

Traits #3 and #4 appear strongly as basic drake Blue-winged Teal characteristics (See Figure 1). Indeed, even the white "dash" mark in front of the eye and the blue-gray mask coloration may be derived from the prominent white crescent and blue-gray head coloration, respectively, of the Blue-winged Teal drake.

It is important to note that Cinnamon Teal possess many behavioral and morphological features that place them intermediate between the Blue-winged Teal and the Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*), and that fertile hybrids have been known to exist with both of these species in the wild (see Johansgard, 1965, *Handbook of Waterfowl Behavior*, p. 203). Certainly the few Cinnamon Teal which find their way to the eastern United States are most likely to hybridize with the Blue-winged Teal, which breed in larger numbers than the Shoveler, and over a wide range that is comparable in latitude with the breeding range of the western Cinnamon Teal population.

This sighting is the first record for the Cinnamon Teal at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, and for the Cayuga Lake Basin. Bent's *Life Histories of North American Wild Fowl*, Part I, page 122, reports a sighting of the Cinnamon Teal on Seneca Lake in April of 1886.

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Figure 1 — Blue-winged Teal drake (left) with Cinnamon Teal drake in pursuit.