

INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS



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STARVING WATERFOWL BEING FED
ON EASTERN SHORE AND POTOMAC

Thousands of waterfowl on the ice-covered tributaries of Chesapeake Bay near Cambridge, Md., are being fed with grain furnished by the Bureau of Biological Survey, U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Maryland State Game Warden, and local sportsmen, reports Paul G. Redington, chief of the bureau. The area covered by the feeding operations includes the Blackwater Migratory Bird Refuge, an Eastern Shore sanctuary administered by the Biological Survey.

"Only limited funds," says Mr. Redington, "are available for the bureau's operations, and these will be used as long as they are available. If the emergency still continues after depletion of Federal funds, it is hoped that interested sportsmen and conservationists will cooperate in supplying grain to maintain the work."

The bureau's game protector stationed at Cambridge reports that the ^{only} open water is at the eddy currents of the streams, often a mile or more apart. "Each," he says, "is filled to capacity with waterfowl--ducks, geese, and swans--and all are apparently in serious condition. Scores of dead birds are picked up every day."

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The game protector's report was confirmed by a bureau scientist who investigated conditions in the Eastern Shore region. The species most seriously affected, according to the investigator, are black ducks, pintails, and widgeons. Canvasbacks also are suffering, but because these birds are accustomed to feed in deep rather than shallow water and because the unfrozen areas are generally farther from shore, this species is not threatened so seriously as are those that normally feed in shallow water.

Feeding Saves Potomac Ducks

Feeding operations begun under similar circumstances a week ago, and continuing, have saved large numbers of black ducks, ringnecks, baldpates, and other ducks and coots starving on the Potomac below Washington. The feeding in this area has been carried on by the Biological Survey in cooperation with Virginia authorities and sportsmen. A few of the birds observed were unable to recover, but others known to be in a seriously weakened condition regained strength and were able to fly.