



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

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BUREAU OF BIOLOGICAL SURVEY

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BREEDING RANGES OF GAME BIRDS REDUCED, SURVEY REPORT REVEALS

A series of striking maps showing how greatly the breeding ranges of many American game birds have been reduced is part of a recent mimeographed leaflet issued by the Bureau of Biological Survey, United States Department of the Interior. The leaflet points out that information on the original as well as the present distribution of various game species is indispensable to the game technician who is working for the restoration or increase of wildlife on an area.

The leaflet, BS-158, entitled "Original and Present Breeding Ranges of Certain Game Birds in the United States," is available to the public upon request.

Attempts to introduce or propagate game birds and mammals outside their natural ranges usually end in failure or expensive and doubtful success, according to author Robert C. McClanahan, who adds, however, that there have been some notable exceptions.

It is generally recognized that ranges are not stable, but are continually changing. The English sparrow and European starling, for example, spread rapidly after their introduction into the United States. The appearance of the ring-necked duck as a nesting bird in Maine and the spread of the prairie chicken northwesterly are striking instances of recent extensions in range.

Most of the breeding ranges, however, have been narrowed, the most extreme example being the reduction in range of the trumpeter swan.

Easy to understand at a glance, each map in the series is devoted to a single bird and shows the former and present ranges. The trumpeter swan in the United States originally bred in Iowa, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, Idaho, and Montana. Today in this country it breeds only in a small area including the Red Rock Migratory Waterfowl Refuge, Mont., and Yellowstone National Park, Wyo.

Other birds whose breeding ranges are mapped are the Canada goose, mallard, black duck, gadwall, baldpate, pintail, green-winged teal, blue-winged teal, cinnamon teal, shoveler, wood duck, ruddy duck, blue goose, ruffed grouse, prairie chicken, lesser prairie chicken, sharp-tailed grouse, sage hen, bobwhite, scaled quail, California quail, Gambel's quail, mountain quail, wild turkey, sandhill crane, woodcock, Wilson snipe, long-billed curlew, band-tailed pigeon, mourning dove, and white-winged dove.

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