

Grey Lag Geese feeding on the stalks of Dandelion

A PARTY of twenty feather-cut Grey Lags (*Anser anser*) which had the complete freedom of Chew Valley Reservoir, Somerset, were observed on 20th May, 1957, from a distance of only thirty yards. During the thirty minutes they were being watched they fed exclusively on the fresh and milky stalks of Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale* agg.). Their method of feeding was to pluck the Dandelion stalks (the heads of which were or had been in full seed) very near to the base of the plant, and then 'chew' the trailing stalks until only the seed heads were visible. These were usually, though not always, discarded. Each bird acted in the same way a great many times. I am unable to trace similar records of Dandelion as a food for geese.

Bernard King.

Wigeon feeding on moss

AT Cheddar Reservoir, Somerset, the embankment sometimes becomes heavily encrusted by moss, much of which grows in and around the concrete slabs. In early November, 1952, I watched a party of about twelve Wigeon (*Anas penelope*) eagerly feeding on this—they appeared to take only the surface of the material and seldom pulled up large quantities of the moss. At the time of observation it was just after dawn and very cold with heavy ground frost in the district, but in the area in which they were feeding comparative mildness prevailed, and this may have been the reason for the presence of the Wigeon.

When the birds departed I carefully examined the embankment. The moss showed considerable interference and loss of the surface greenness. No other distinguishable plant life was growing in the moss crevices.

James W. Campbell in his paper 'The food of Wigeon and Brent Goose,' *Brit. Birds* 39:194-200 (1946) mentions moss in small quantities found in the stomachs of four Wigeon taken in Lancashire, South Wales and Benbecula.

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