

REVIEW.

Some Scottish Breeding Duck. Their Arrival and Dispersal. By Evelyn V. Baxter and Leonora Jeffrey Rintoul. Edinburgh, Oliver & Boyd. 5s. net.

THIS little book issued in a paper cover was worthy of elaboration. The authors have carefully gathered into its pages all the records they can find concerning the exact distribution of the Ducks which breed in Scotland, and the facts, so far as ascertainable, regarding the increase and spread of certain species. The probable or possible causes and direction of dispersal are discussed in some detail under each species, while in a final chapter we have a few pages of more general conclusions on this interesting subject. If the authors have not been able to arrive at any very definite conclusions they have in any case provided an invaluable basis of facts upon which this important subject may be further argued, and we heartily commend this little work to the student of dispersal.

The direction from which a recorded spreading arises is always an exceedingly difficult matter to trace, and how valuable it would have been to have had one or two records of ringed birds even if they served only as checks—a practical point mentioned by the authors, which should be specially noted by readers of *British Birds*.

In comparing the status of each species with the accounts given in the *Practical Handbook* we note under Common Pochard that our phrase "breeds most parts" (Vol. II., p. 317) is too sweeping, since the bird is more local than this implies and the suggested reason that it prefers for breeding those lochs which are fringed with reeds, etc., is probably correct. In Solway we find that it has been recorded as breeding only from Wigtownshire, in Argyll and Dee there are no records, in the north-west Highlands only one and in the Inner Hebrides only on Tiree. The extension of the Eider as a breeding bird to Portpatrick in Wigtownshire (apparently from Colonsay) during the last two or three years is very interesting, and has not, we believe, been previously recorded. The authors give reasons for stating that the record of the Common Scoter breeding in Tiree should not be doubted. The ranges of the Goosander and Red-breasted Merganser given in the *Practical Handbook* should be extended at their south-eastern limits to the northern part of the Forth area, since both species breed in south-west Perthshire, and Mr. W. Evans has supplemented this point by showing (*Scot. Nat.*, 1922, pp. 105-108) that several breeding records from this district have been overlooked by even such careful workers as the authors of the book under review.—H.F.W.