

At times of drought the density of birds becomes much higher around the stock ponds with water.

It is suggested that the requirements of these flocks are food, preferably young green herbaceous growth, water and lack of disturbance.

TABLE IV.—DISTANCE OF FLOCKS TO WATER

No. of birds in flock	Direct Distance to water	Approx. area and type of water
89	100 yards	river
93	immed. adjacent	0.5 acre pond
127	immed. adjacent	0.25 acre pond
165	immed. adjacent	0.25 acre pond
227	immed. adjacent	1.0 acre pond
554	immed. adjacent	3.5 acre pond

BREEDING

Broods first appeared on stock ponds in September. The size of the ponds with broods varied from 108 sq yds to $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres. The average size for ponds with and without broods was not significantly different. The areas of the ponds were calculated from the appropriate formulae and measurements were paced out and converted to yards.

The distance of ponds from the nearest stand of trees was measured by pacing and Table V shows that the majority of these were within 100 yards. Ponds not supporting broods show a tendency to be further from stands of trees than those with broods.

TABLE V.—DISTANCE OF PONDS FROM NEAREST TREES

Distance of Pond from Trees	100yds and less	100yds—400yds	Beyond 400yds	Total No. of Ponds
Ponds with broods	28	17	6	51
	55%	33%	12%	
Ponds without broods visited regularly	17	36	40	93
	18%	39%	43%	

Comparison of ponds was made for overhead cover, invertebrate fauna and vegetation in and around the ponds but no significant difference was found between those supporting and those not supporting broods. The birds do not appear to require overhead cover around the edge as 11 of the 51 ponds with broods had clean pasture edges.

Ponds completely surrounded by bush to the edges did not support a brood.

In the first few weeks the ducklings when disturbed swim to the middle of the pond and dive. The young when fully feathered (except for the primary feathers) prefer, when disturbed on the smaller ponds, to hide in cover at the pond's edge but if cover is lacking, they depend on diving. Hiding occurred when the parents gave the first danger call and did not depend on the distance of the source of disturbance from the pond. When the young could see the source of disturbance they did not attempt to hide. Once in hiding the young birds remained motionless and could be picked up by hand.