

Wildlife Excerpts from Vineyard Gazette

August 19, 2014 (through page 100)

April 5, 1850

...Voted, That the law respecting Grouse, or Heathhen, be suspended so as to allow the hunting of them, without dogs, on the 12th and 13th of November...

December 1850 – Daniel Fisher advertises for the fact that he will purchase Hawks at 25¢ each. Delivered by Jan 1, 185. Ad runs > 2 times. Intention unclear. To improve hunting? Aid farmers with chickens? [see next entry below]

Wanted

All the hawks on Martha's Vineyard, for which the subscriber will pay twenty-five cents for each one delivered to him on or before the first of January, 1851
DANIEL FISHER

April 22, 1853

Destruction of Snakes – There seems to have been a wholesale destruction of black snakes carried on during the past week, a large family of them having been discovered on the road between this place and Holmes Hole, twenty-two of which were killed. It is said that the whole family is not destroyed yet.

September 3, 1853

Plovers – Fine, fat plovers have made their appearance in this vicinity, and large numbers of sportsmen are in pursuit of them.

August 31, 1855

Ocean House
EDGARTOWN

Families who intend spending the Summer season at a WATERING PLACE, can find none more conducive to health than Edgartown. The subscriber having leased the largest and most commodious Hotel on the Island, assures families who may visit his hotel, that every effort will be made to render their sojourn pleasant and comfortable. Gentlemen who delight in the exciting sports of Angling and Gunning, will find here an ample field for their favorite enjoyments. Blue Fish, Tautog, Bass and Sword Fish, which are found in abundance, tempt the sportsman to the wave, whilst Edgartown Plains, covered with various kinds of game, afford to the gunsman sport of an exhilarating and inviting character...

September 5, 1856

Plover – These delicious birds are now killed in great numbers on our plains. They are very fat and fine this season. Mr. Jonathan Munroe killed fifty on Monday morning last before breakfast. We are under obligations to Mr. M. for a dozen.

Since the above was written, a gentleman has informed us that not less than three hundred plovers were killed one morning of this week.

January 1, 1858

Fifty-one deer have been killed in Sandwich woods, bordering upon Pocasset, during the present season – a larger number than for any previous year for a long time.

October 28, 1859 – Eagle shot near Squibnocket Pond by A. T. Poole measured 6'5" 8lbs 2 oz

February 10, 1860

..In Tisbury, (Middletown) Dr. Daniel Fisher is building a costly dam on one of the ponds in that neighborhood, where he intends to erect a first class flour mill. The pond is already stocked with pickerel and trout, and it is the doctor's intention to have such a stream of flowing water as will contribute greatly to their development and increase. The dam and mill will be completed during the coming summer.

October 5, 1860

LETTER FROM GAY HEAD

Correspondence of the Boston Courier.

TETE JOLI, Sept. 1, 1860...

...We were provided with nice carriages, having elliptic springs, as the principal driver repeatedly assured those who ventured "to doubt it" ...

...Our road was along the southerly side of the island, from one extreme end to the other, about twenty miles close beside the ocean, which was as calm, and slept as peacefully, all the long afternoon, as an unweaned child. Amongst the thick oaken shrubbery, that skirts the leading road, and extends many miles back into the island, are still to be found specimens of the wild goat, whose origin is a profound mystery, as well as the pinnated grouse, or prairie hen of the West, which is occasionally killed here by a skillful sportsman. This bird is found nowhere else in New England...

December 6, 1861

The Use of Birds – Four petitions have been presented to the French Senate asking the influence of that body in preserving birds which destroy insects hurtful to agriculture, and a committee of the Senate have drawn up a report on these petitions...

...it is proposed, for the preservation of birds, to prohibit bird-nesting and the destruction of the eggs and young of birds, and also to prohibit the destruction of all birds, except by firearms, with such exceptions as are named in the report.

December 20, 1861

Muskrat Skins

The subscriber will pay the highest cash price for good Skins. They must be taken off whole and stretched,--with the hair side in,--on boards about eighteen inches long and four inches wide.

West Tisbury, Dec. 20, 1861

W. F. DURGIN

September 11, 1863

EXCITING – The hunters are becoming excited over the game which has, a few days since, arrived and numbers of the golden and green-head plovers have been shot during the past week. There are some sportsmen visiting here who are enjoying this brief season highly. Mr. William Pent has been the most fortunate, having brought in 79 birds at one trip. Two other gentlemen, together, brought in 94; an other two gentlemen brought in one. This must have been rather up *hill* or perhaps it was because they were poor *fishers*.

[American Golden Plover – migrant only heading to northern breeding grounds. Good hunting and generally pass by the seacoast in the fall. 1895 North American Shore Birds. Daniel Giraud Elliot]

September 6, 1867

GREEN PLOVER – Large numbers of these favorite birds have passed on their migratory journey for warmer climes; but very few *remained* with us, much to the regret of the sporting fraternity.

July 31, 1868

BLACK SNAKE –While Capt. Shubael C. Norton of this town was returning home from mowing a few days ago, he saw a large black snake, lying near a rail fence, and while endeavoring to hit it with stones, his snakeship started for Capt. N., with great rapidity, and when within a few feet of him, coiled himself preparatory to a jump. Capt. N., faced him, and gradually backed up to the fence, and getting a rail quickly killed him. The snake measured five feet and a half in length, and was really a dangerous customer.

February 19, 1869

GOSNOLD – Mr. Oliver C. Grinnell of Naushon, shot five eagles a few days since. They are not in the hands of a taxidermist. The united spread of their wings was 36 feet, 10 inches, two of them measuring 7 feet, 8 inches each.

