



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

A METHOD OF MOUNTING SKULLS AND HEADS

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SKULLS—Skulls may be conveniently mounted on small inverted clay flower pots in the following manner. One end of an iron wire is thrust through the bottom opening of the pot and bent sig-zag or spirally two or three inches. This bent portion of the wire is anchored by half filling the pot with plaster. When the plaster is dry the pot is inverted. The skull is mounted on the pointed, free end of the wire by pushing it through a cork in the foramen magnum. The skull is oriented by bending the wire support.

HEADS—Mountings of game bird heads are especially valuable because they represent the most distinctive part of the body. They are easily procured from hunters, whereas the process of collecting entire specimens involves special permits, considerable time, and expense. Furthermore, the mounting of the head only, when collected as suggested above, helps to uphold the principle of conservation.

Ordinary taxidermic methods are used in preparing the mounting of the head and neck. The skin of the neck is pulled over the head until the eyes are completely exposed. The brain, neck, eyes, and muscles of the head are removed and all internal parts well treated with powdered white arsenic. The orbital cavities are stuffed with cotton. A piece of iron wire a foot long and pointed at one end is wrapped about three inches from the sharp tip with thin layers of cotton or tow until it is of the same thickness and length as the original neck. The tip of the wrapped wire is forced through the foramen magnum as far as it will go.

The neck skin is pushed back over the reconstructed neck and then manipulated and shaped to give the whole a realistic appearance. The free end of the wire is anchored in the plaster by the same method as described in the mounting of the skulls. An application of paint to the pot improves the mounting. The accompanying illustrations (Figs. 1 and 2) show the finished product.