

Waterfowl Identification

WFS 340

Order
Anseriformes



Anas acuta

Family
Anatidae


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Classification

- Order
 - Family
 - Subfamily
 - Tribe
 - Genus
 - Species


Subfamily *Anserinae*

Tribe *Dendrocygnini*




**Whistling or
Tree-ducks**

Tribe *Cygnini*



Swans

Tribe *Anserini*



True Geese

White-fronted Goose

(*Anser albifrons*)

20 in. BL
60 in. WS



- Medium-sized long-necked goose
 - **Mostly brown plumage**
- **White patch at base of pink or orange bill**
 - **Irregular black flecking on belly**
 - **Orange legs and feet**

Snow Goose

(*Chen caerulescens*)

19 in. BL



58 in. WS

- Medium-sized Goose
 - Pink bill w/ black patch along mandibles
- Blue Morph
 - Throat white
 - White-edged scapulars
- White Morph
 - Entirely white plumage
 - Black primaries

Canada Goose

(*Branta canadensis*)

11 Races

B. c. maxima






B. c. minima



16-25 in. BL
50-68 in. WS
4-13 lbs

- Small to large long-necked goose
 - **Black bill, head, and neck**
- **White throat patch extends up to cheek**
- **Brown back, upper wing, and flanks**

Subfamily Anatinae

Tribe <i>Cairinini</i>	Tribe <i>Anatini</i>	Tribe <i>Aythiini</i>
		
Perching Ducks	Dabbling Ducks	Diving Ducks
Tribe <i>Mergini</i>	Tribe <i>Oxyurini</i>	
		
Sea Ducks	Stiff-tailed Ducks	

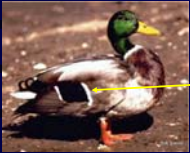

Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*)

13 in. BL 28 in. WS

 <p>Drake</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red bill and eye • Green head • White throat and cheek stripe • Chestnut breast • Golden flanks 	 <p>Hen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gray bill • White teardrop around eye and edge of secondaries • White throat • Gray-brown head and body
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Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)

16 in. BL 36 in. WS

 <p>Drake</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green head • Yellow or olive bill • White ring around neck • Chestnut breast • Gray belly and flanks 	 <p>Hen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orange bill with black central patch • Dark cap and eye line • Mottled brown/tan plumage
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American Black Duck

(*Anas rubripes*)

16 in. BL 36 in. WS



Drake

- Dark brown head & body
- Dark blue speculum not bordered by white
- Greenish-yellow bill
- Bright red legs



Hen

- Dark brown head & body
- Dark blue speculum not bordered by white
- Green bill with black saddle
- Orange legs

“A Forest Duck”

American Green-winged Teal

(*Anas crecca carolinensis*)

10.5 in. BL 24 in. WS



Drake

- Rust colored head with green post-ocular patch
- Black bill



Hen

- Light brown head and body
- Dark gray bill

“The fastest duck in NA”

• Very small-bodied duck

• Green speculum

Blue-winged Teal

(*Anas discors*)

11 in. BL 24 in. WS



Drake

- Green speculum BUT blue lesser and middle coverts
- Blue-iridescent head
- White crescent patch
- Buff breast & flanks w/ spots


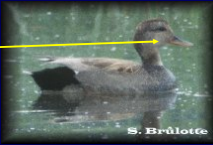


Hen

- Light brown head
- Dark brown crown
- Mottled gray-brown body

Gadwall (*Anas strepera*)

14.5 in. BL 35 in. WS

- Average-sized bodied duck with steep forehead
- White speculum (*only dabbler*) and black rump

<p><u>Drake</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black bill 	<p><u>Hen</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gray bill with orange edges
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American Wigeon (*Anas americana*)

14 in. BL 34 in. WS






- **Blue** bill with black nail
- White secondary coverts (grayer in females)

<p><u>Drake</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White crown • Green post-ocular stripe • Rusty breast and flanks 	<p><u>Hen</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mottled body w/rusty flanks contrasting w/ head & neck • Dusky eye patch
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Northern Pintail (*Anas acuta*)

18.5 in. BL 35 in. WS


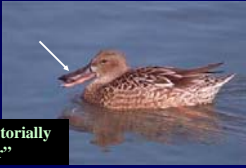
- Dull **blue** bill with black culmen stripe
- Very long neck, small head and attenuated retrices

<p><u>Drake</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dark brown head • White chest & neck extending into latitudinal stripe 	<p><u>Hen</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tan head lightly colored mottled body • Bronze speculum
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Northern Shoveler

(*Anas clypeata*)

14 in. BL 31 in. WS

"A very territorially breeder"

- Spatulate bill

Drake

- Black bill
- Green head and yellow eyes
- White chest & chestnut sides


Hen

- Orange bill with mottling
- Tan head and brown eyes
- Mottled brown body

Canvasback

(*Aythya valisineria*)

15 in. BL 34 in. WS

One of the fastest ducks (>100 km/h)

- Long sloping forehead and peaked crown
- Black bill

Drake

- Red eye, head, and neck
- Black chest and breast
- Pale gray back & flanks

Hen

- Brown eye, head, and neck
- Brown chest and breast
- Pale gray back and flanks

Redhead

(*Aythya americana*)

14.5 in. BL
33 in. WS

"The noisiest diving duck during breeding"





- Smoothly rounded head
- Dark wing with grayish secondaries

Drake


- Red head & neck; yellow eye!
- Blue bill w/ white ring before black tip

Hen


- Brown eye, head, and neck
- Blue-gray bill w/ faint white ring before black tip

Ring-necked Duck (*Aythya collaris*)

12 in. BL28 in. WS



Jumps



- Bill with white semi-terminal ring
- White/cream-colored ring at base of bill

Drake


- Purple head & neck; yellow eye
- Gray flanks with vertical white finger near black chest

Hen

- Brown eye, head, and neck
- Faint white eye ring and solid white ring before tip

Lesser Scaup (*Aythya affinis*)

12 in. BL 29 in. WS



Transcontinental

- Purplish head
- White on wing restricted to speculum
- Body size

Greater Scaup (*Aythya marila*)

13 in. BL 31 in. WS

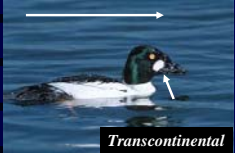


Coastal Areas


- Greenish head
- White on speculum extends to primaries
- Body size

Common Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*)

13 in. BL31 in. WS



Transcontinental



- Short, stubby bill
- Body rides low in water

Drake

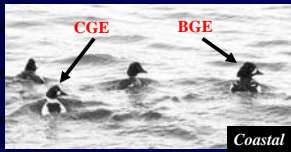
- Green head & neck; yellow eye
- White circular cheek patch
- All white chest, breast, flanks

Hen

- Reddish-brown head
- Terminus of bill light colored
- Gray body

Barrow's Goldeneye (*Bucephala islandica*)

13 in. BL
31 in. WS



"The most territorial of NA ducks"



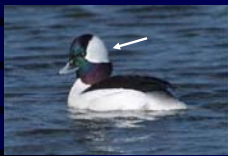
- Steeply sloped forehead
- Purplish head and large crest
- White tear-drop shaped cheek patch
- White neck, breast and belly
 - Dark back

Bufflehead (*Bucephala albeola*)

10 in. BL

(*Bucephala albeola*)

24 in. WS



- "Smallest duck in North America"
- Very small dark gray bill

Drake

- Dark iridescent head
- Large white patch extending from back of head to eye
- White body

Hen

- Dull brown head
- White longitudinal stripe on cheek
- Brown body

Hooded Merganser (*Lophodytes cucullatus*)

13 in. BL

(*Lophodytes cucullatus*)

26 in. WS



"Smallest merganser"



- Long, pointed serrated bill
- Fan-like crest, small body, yellow eye

Drake



- Black forehead, cheek, & crest
- White cheek/crest patch not extending to eye

Hen

- Brown head, neck, flanks, back, and wings w/ paler breast
- Faint reddish tinge to crest

Common Merganser (*Mergus merganser*)

18 in. BL 37 in. WS



"Largest merganser"

- Long, pointed serrated bill that is thick at base
- Brown eye

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Drake</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dark green head with no crest • White body and black back 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Hen</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copper-colored head with crisp chest separation • Distinct white chin patch
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Ruddy Duck (*Oxyura jamaicensis*)

11 in. BL 23 in. WS

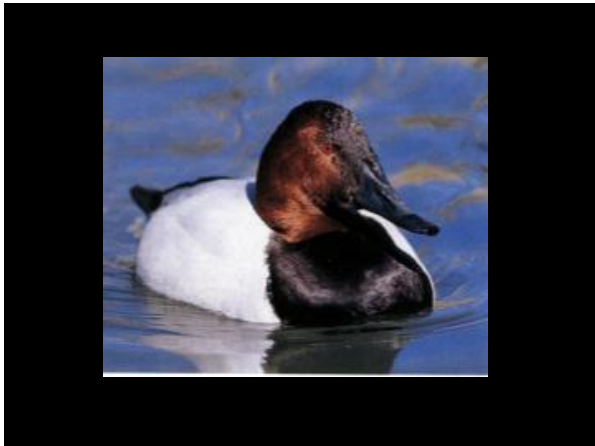



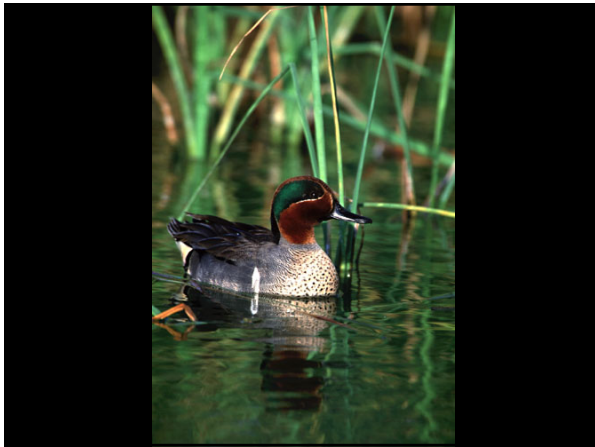
Can move through water waveless

- Small, chunky diving duck with flat, wide bill
- Long stiff retrices that are often held vertically

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Drake</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bright blue bill • Rust colored body • White cheek & under tail covers 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Hen</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dull brown bill • Dusky longitudinal cheek stripe • Gray-brown body
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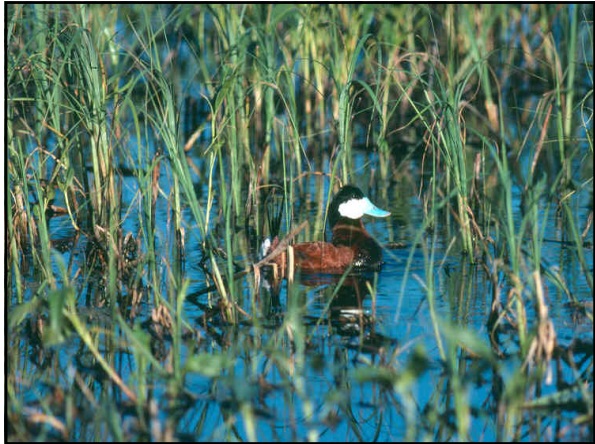






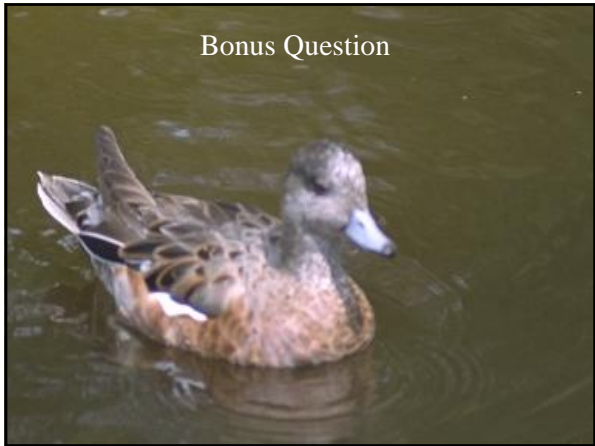




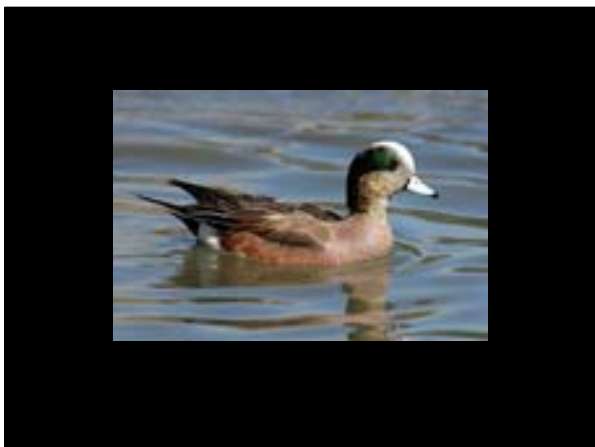






























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Mallard

Southern California