

Duck Overview

Disregarding the Whistling-Ducks, some 29 species of ducks have been recorded in Indiana. In terms of traditional groupings this breaks down into 11 dabblers, seven divers, six sea ducks, three mergansers, and one stiff-tail. Of these, only three (Wood Duck, Mallard, and Blue-winged Teal) are regular breeders in the state. The relative abundances of these ducks in Indiana are tabulated in the Duck Abundance Table.

DUCK ABUNDANCE TABLE							
Arranged in AOU order							
	Abundance Index	20-year mean	Rank		Abundance Index	20-year mean	Rank
Wood Duck	1369.1	1371	12	Lesser Scaup	8942.1	10,233	2
Gadwall	1301.9	1851	14	King Eider	1.0	0.5	27
Eurasian Wigeon	1.0	0.3	26	Harlequin Duck	5.2	6.2	25
American Wigeon	1264.9	923	15	Surf Scoter	65.6	102.1	23
American Black Duck	6454.5	1291	3	White-winged Scoter	72.2	96.1	22
Mallard	52220.2	20,605	1	Black Scoter	65.5	90.2	24
Blue-winged Teal	2697.3	2853	7	Long-tailed Duck	1121.7	45.3	16
Cinnamon Teal	0.5	0.2	29	Bufflehead	1004.3	1170	17
Northern Shoveler	948.3	1207	18	Common Goldeneye	2237.6	2099	8
Northern Pintail	2873.9	1576	6	Barrow's Goldeneye	0.6	0.05	28
Green-winged Teal	1621.2	1975	10	Hooded Merganser	943.1	1388	19
Canvasback	767.4	426	20	Common Merganser	1679.9	1743	9
Redhead	1302.8	1254	13	Red-breasted Merganser	4120.6	5640	5
Ring-necked Duck	4740.4	5816	4	Ruddy Duck	642.1	821	21
Greater Scaup	1535.0	2542	11				
Arranged by All-Time Abundance							
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Abundance Index: = (100,000xgull number)/Total of all gulls (i.e., 1000 times percentage)							
20-year mean: = total number observed (1985-2004)/20							
Rank: = Rank order based on all-time total numbers							

The state's most abundant duck species, by far, is the Mallard, which comprises more than half of all individuals reported. Although in inclusion of historical data elevates the American Black Duck to third ranking, annual totals over the past two decades (20-year means in the abundance table) would reduce it to fourteenth place if it were ranked by that

parameter. This disparity between abundance index and 20-year mean reflects recent declines in Indiana's Black Duck population.

A situation similar to that of the Black Duck also occurs with the Long-tailed Duck. In this case a single record of 31539 individuals (almost 80 percent of all birds observed) on 26 December 1955 greatly inflated the historical total for this sea duck.

The five least common ducks are Harlequin, Eurasian Wigeon, King Eider, Barrow's Goldeneye, and Cinnamon Teal (in declining order of abundance). Among these, however, the rarest over the past two decades is Barrow's Goldeneye, with only one report since 1985.

Hybrids

Several examples of the following hybrids have occurred in Indiana: Common Goldeneye X Hooded Merganser, American Black Duck X Mallard, and Blue-winged X Cinnamon Teal. These are discussed in the species accounts.

Other interesting hybrid report include a Mallard X Northern Pintail that was collected in Newton County 16 November 1956 and the specimen sent to the National Museum (Mumford files).