





XEROX®



Wood Duck

It is hard to believe that one of North America's most colorful and widely seen duck species was driven to the brink of extinction by over-hunting and habitat destruction. Today, the wood duck population has rebounded thanks to extensive conservation efforts. The wood duck remains a favorite among wildlife enthusiasts and avid bird watchers alike.

Nesting and Breeding

Wood ducks pair and mate in early spring. The male selects a high tree hole where she typically lays 8-15 eggs. The chicks hatch after a 30-day incubation period. Within 24 hours the chicks climb out of the nest and stop to the ground in search of water. The chicks are guided and fed by the hen. The chicks are independent three weeks after hatching and can fend for themselves.

Habitat and Diet

The wood duck's habitat consists of a variety of forested areas, including swamps, wetlands, and backwaters. The ducks are commonly found in the shallow for insects and other invertebrates.

Molting and Migration

The end of breeding season for signifies molting time for the wood ducks. The male and female leave their nest and the hatching in the care of the hen. The male completes the task of raising the young before migrating to the southern U.S. for the winter. The female may not migrate and stay in the southern states year-round residents.

Wood Duck

Common name: Wood Duck
Scientific name: *Aix sponsa*
Family: Anatidae
Order: Anseriformes
Size: Length 17-20" (43-51 cm)
Weight 3-5 lbs (1.4-2.3 kg)

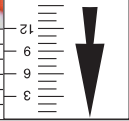
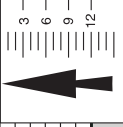
Conservation

Once driven to the brink of extinction, the wood duck (Aix sponsa) is again one of North America's most common sighted waterfowl. Over-hunting and loss of forested wetlands contributed to the bird's near demise. But better management of forested wetlands and conservation efforts begun in the 1920s helped restore the population to today's estimates.

With dramatic color variations - from a bright green head to patches of grey, reddish-brown, and white on the neck and body - the male wood duck is easily distinguished from the spotted, dull brownish-grey female.







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