

Bird of the Month - December

Mallard

Male Mallard



IDENTIFICATION

- Males Green head may appear blue at some angles to the sun
- Male has yellow bill, white neck ring and curly feathers at the base of the tail
- Females are streaky brown with a blue patch in their wing
- Female Mallards make the typical duck “quack” while males mutter a more subdued call

FOOD

- A generalist that will eat a wide variety of foods, will often tip up (dabble) searching for aquatic plants in shallow water and likes waste grains in winter

PREDATORS

- Humans, raccoons, skunks, coyotes, falcons, hawks and eagles

Female Mallard



Male Mallard



BEHAVIORS AND FUN FACTS

- Most widespread duck in the world
- Most domestic ducks can trace their ancestry to the Mallard
- Many males will sometimes aggressively pursue one female
- Mallards, like most ducks, shed their breeding feathers in late summer and, for a while, the males and females look alike
- Mallards are very tolerant of humans even though they are the most hunted duck in the world