

Lesser Scaup (Female)

Aythya affinis

Two scaup species live in North America: the Greater Scaup prefers salt water and is found in America and Eurasia, while the Lesser Scaup prefers freshwater and is found only in North America. The Lesser Scaup is one of the most abundant and widespread of the diving ducks in North America

Keys to Identification

Adult Description

- Medium-sized diving duck.
- Slight bump or peak on the back of the head.
- Bill bluish with a small black tip.
- Male with black head, chest, and rear end, and gray sides (black on the ends and white in the middle).

Male Description

Breeding (Alternate Plumage)

Head, neck, upper back, and breast black; head with purplish iridescence. Back white, covered with thin, black wavy lines. Rump black. Belly white. Sides white, with some fine dark streaks. Undertail black.

Non-breeding (Basic Plumage)

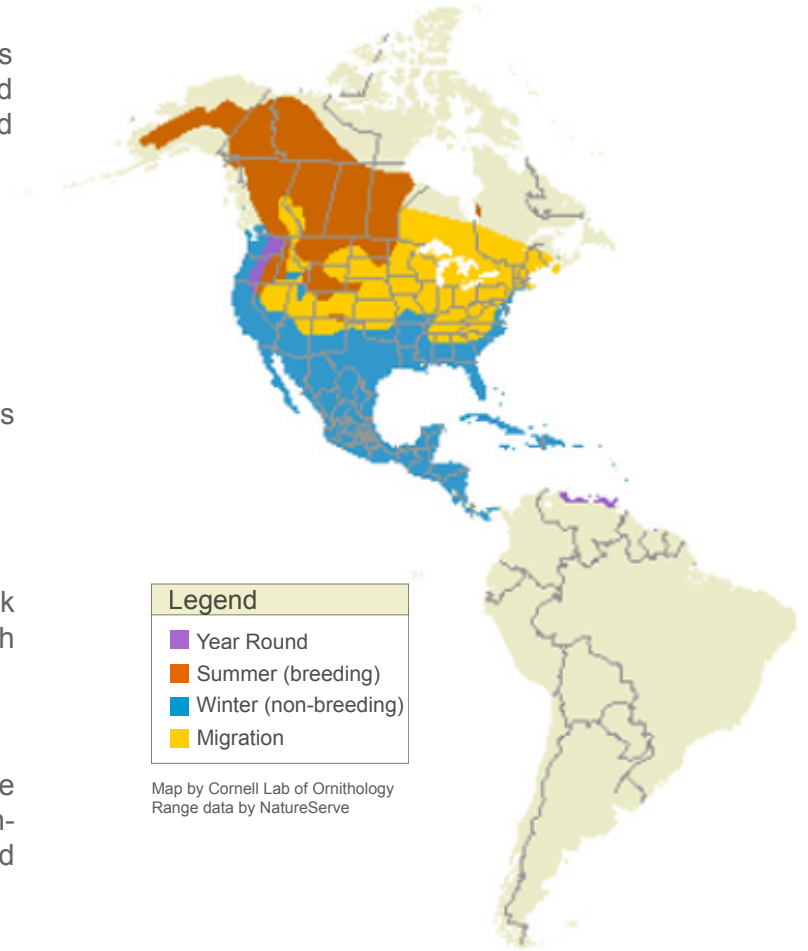
Similar to female, but with only a few white feathers on face instead of a large white patch. Head and neck blackish brown. Breast dark with some white edging to feathers. Back brown with white edges to feathers. Underparts mottled brownish and white. Tail dark grayish.

Female Description

White area at base of bill. Head and neck dark brown with some light mottling. Back darkish brown with white flecks. Breast buffy brown. Belly whitish. Sides and flanks brown. Tail dark brown.

Immature Description

Similar to adult female.



Measurements

Both Sexes

- Length - 15.4 - 18.1 inches
- Wingspan - 26.8 - 30.7 inches
- Weight - 16 - 38.4 ounces