



60th annual Waterfowl Breeding Population and Habitat Survey Trends in Duck Breeding Populations 1955–2015 Report

The Trends in Duck Breeding Populations report summarizes information about the status of duck populations and wetland habitats during spring 2015, focusing on areas encompassed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife (USFWS) and Canadian Wildlife Services' (CWS) Waterfowl Breeding Population and Habitat Survey (Waterfowl Survey).

Report Highlights

The total 2015 duck population estimate (excluding scoters, eiders, long-tailed ducks, mergansers, and wood ducks) is 49.5 million birds. This population estimate is similar to the 2014 estimate of 49.2 million and is 43% higher than the long-term average.

Estimated mallard abundance is 11.6 million, which is similar to the 2014 estimate, and 51% above the long-term average of 7.7 million.

Estimated abundance of gadwall is 3.8 million 100% above their long-term average of 1.9 million.



American Wigeon USFWS

The American wigeon estimate is 3 million which is similar to last year's estimate and 17% above their long-term average of 2.6 million.

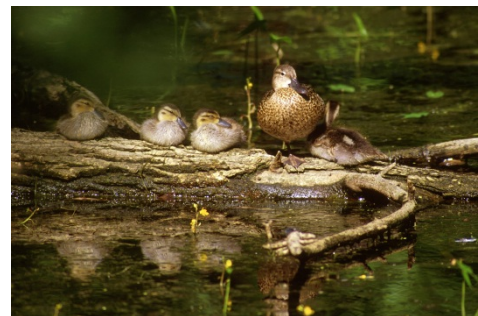
The estimated abundance of green-winged teal is 4.1 million, which is 19% above the 2014 estimate of 3.4 million and 98% above the long-term average.

Following a relatively mild winter and an early spring, precipitation in the U.S. prairies since last summer has been average to mostly below average.

Habitat conditions declined from 2014 in Montana and the Dakotas despite significant rainfall in May, which came too late to benefit most nesting waterfowl.

Annual winter precipitation was lower in the northern part of the survey area; the Parklands, however, continue to benefit from hold-over water. The boreal region and Alaska exhibited drier conditions, but an early spring and lack of flooding should aid waterfowl production.

Most of the Canadian portion of the traditional survey area was rated as fair or good this year with areas of excellent conditions that received greater annual precipitation.



Teal brood USFWS

The annual Waterfowl Breeding Population and Habitat Survey is conducted in cooperation with the Canadian Wildlife Service and other state, provincial, and private conservation partners. The report does not include information from surveys conducted by state or provincial agencies.

While this year's survey results were very favorable, when and where waterfowl will be encountered this fall depends on many factors. Food availability and the condition and distribution of water resources all influence local duck and goose abundance, distribution, behavior, and ultimately, hunter success.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service continues to monitor changes throughout the survey regions and is mindful of large-scale changes in the all regions of North America. Extreme weather conditions and large scale changes in land-use have the potential to impact duck production in the future.



Conservation efforts are important to ensuring continued population stability of ducks and geese. Waterfowl hunters contribute to conservation efforts through the purchase of a Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp (known as the Duck Stamp) which ultimately benefits waterfowl and other birds.

Details from the survey crews and information about waterfowl management across North America are available at www.Flyways.US

The full Trends in Duck Breeding Populations report can be found here:

<http://www.fws.gov/birds/surveys-and-data/reports-and-publications/population-status.php>

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Migratory Bird Program
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