



MALLARD DUCK

The Drake, or male Mallard in the picture is in its handsome winter plumage. In June and July it will begin to shed and regrow its feathers. We call this 'molting'. By August it will look brownish, just like the female.

Mallards are the best known Ducks. They are one of our most important game birds. They winter in all states except those that are far north. They nest from the Great Lakes into the northwestern states. The female Mallard chooses a hollow in the ground, near a pond, for its nest. It lines the nest with reeds, grasses, and feathers from its breast. In it eight to ten greenish to gray-buff eggs are laid. The female alone cares for her brood. Mallards feed on water insects, pond weed, smartweed, wild celery, wild rice, and other seeds.