

Common Gallinule (formerly Common Moorhen)

Gallinula galeata

The most widely distributed member of the rail family, the Common Gallinule inhabits marshes and ponds from Canada to Chile, from northern Europe to southern Africa, and across Asia to the Pacific. Vocal and boldly marked, the species can be quite conspicuous, sometimes using its long toes to walk atop floating vegetation.

Keys to Identification

Adult Description

- Dark, with white flank stripe.
- Red bill and forehead.
- Swims on the surface of the water like a duck.
- Bill is triangular like a chicken, not flat like a duck.
- White stripes on the sides of the undertail.

Immature Description

The juvenile is brownish-gray with a drab maroon bill and no frontal shield.

Measurements

Both Sexes

- Length - 12.6 - 13.8 inches
- Wingspan - 21.3 - 24.4 inches
- Weight - 10.9 - 16.1 ounces

