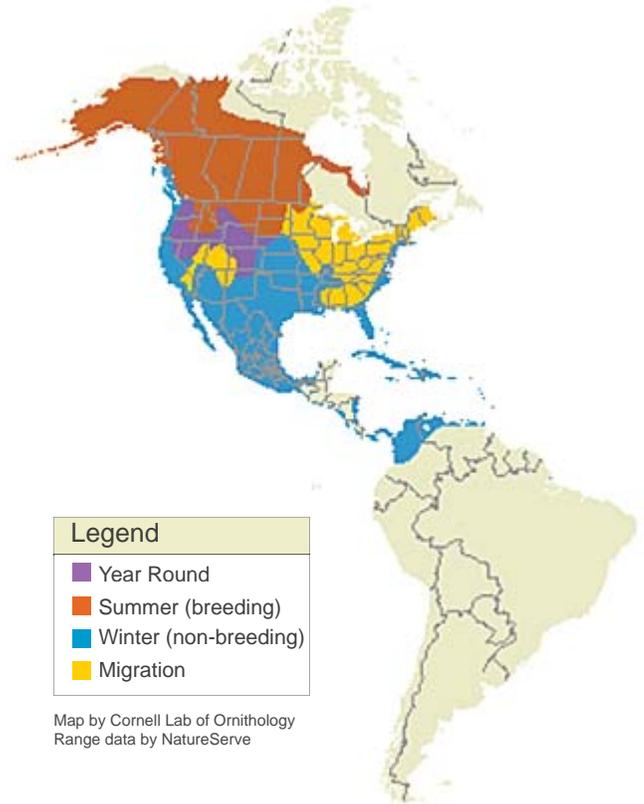


# American Wigeon

*Anas americana*

A common and increasingly abundant duck, the American Wigeon breeds in northwestern North America and is found throughout the rest of the continent in migration and in winter. Its small bill and the male's white forehead, as well as certain aspects of nesting and feeding behavior, distinguish this species from other dabbling ducks.



## Keys to Identification

### Adult Description

- Medium-sized duck.
- Male with white crown.
- Green face patch.
- Large white patch in wings.
- Black rear end bordered with white.

### Male Description

#### Breeding (Alternate) Plumage:

White or cream-colored forehead and forecrown and broad dark-green patch extending from behind eye to nape. Bill is bluish-gray with black tip. Cheeks and chin grayish. Breast, sides, and back are pinkish-brown. Rear flanks show a white patch; undertail coverts are black.

#### Eclipse (Basic) Plumage:

Variable amounts of white and green on head. Undertail coverts are variably black, with some white. In all plumages, male shows white patch on upper wing, and dark-green speculum.

### Female Description

Head appears grayish overall, with finely-blended white and dusky streaks. Breast and flanks are pale reddish-brown; mantle is grayish-brown with some buff barring. Bill is small and grayish, with a black tip.

### Immature Description

Similar to adult female.

## Cool Facts

- The American Wigeon's short bill enables it to exert more force at the bill tip than other dabbling ducks, thus permitting efficient dislodging and plucking of vegetation.
- The American Wigeon is the dabbling duck most likely to leave water and graze on vegetation in fields. However, feeding in fields on grain, such as corn, is rather rare.
- The American Wigeon's diet has a higher proportion of plant matter than the diet of any other dabbling duck.

## Measurements

### Both Sexes

- Length - 16.5 - 23.2 inches
- Wingspan - 33.1 inches
- Weight - 19.0 - 46.9 ounces