

# Red-Breasted Merganser

*Mergus serrator*

A large diving duck with a long thin bill, the Red-breasted Merganser is found in large lakes, rivers and the ocean. It prefers salt water more than the other two species of merganser.

## Keys to Identification

### Adult Description

- Large, thin diving duck.
- Long, thin, orange to red-orange bill.
- Shaggy crest on back of head.
- White patches in wing visible in flight.
- Male with gray sides, dark reddish chest, white neck, and iridescent green head.

### Male Description

Breeding (Alternate) Plumage: Head iridescent greenish black. Neck white. Chest deep rusty speckled with black. Back dark with long white patch along wings. Tail gray. Outer part of wings black. Bill scarlet-orange. Eyes red.

Nonbreeding (Basic) Plumage: Head rusty brown with long, ragged double crest. Chin pale or gray. Breast, back, wings and tail slaty gray. Belly and flanks white. Bill scarlet-orange. White patch in wing visible in flight. Like female, except has less white on chin, darker back, and wing with larger white patch.

### Female Description

Head rusty brown with long, ragged, double crest. Chin dark or pale, gradually merging with chest color. Breast, back, wings and tail slaty gray. Belly and flanks white. Bill scarlet-orange. White patch in wing visible in flight.

### Immature Description

Immature resembles adult female.

## Measurements

### Both Sexes

- Length - 20.1 - 25.2 inches
- Wingspan - 26.0 - 29.1 inches
- Weight - 28.2 - 47.6 ounces

