



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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1/3 OF U.S. WATERFOWL ARE MALLARDS, F.W.S. WINTER INVENTORY SHOWS

Mallards made up almost one-third of all waterfowl wintering this year in the continental United States, Albert M. Day, Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, disclosed today.

The Service's annual winter inventory of North America's migratory waterfowl, conducted January 11-14, showed the mallards most heavily in the Mississippi Flyway.

Second most numerous waterfowl species was the pintail, accounting for slightly more than 15 percent of the total U.S. wintering population. Largest pintail concentrations were seen in the Pacific Flyway.

Other leading waterfowl species within the United States, in order, were: coot (chiefly in the Atlantic Flyway), snow goose (chiefly in the Mississippi and Central Flyway), Canada goose (chiefly in the Pacific Flyway), baldpate (chiefly in the Pacific Flyway), scaup (chiefly in the Atlantic Flyway), black duck (only in the Atlantic and Mississippi Flyways), blue goose (chiefly in the Mississippi Flyway), green-winged teal (chiefly in the Mississippi Flyway), canvasback (chiefly in the Atlantic Flyway), and redhead (chiefly in the Central and Atlantic Flyways).

Least numerous species seen within the United States during the winter inventory were the bufflehead, swan, American brant, black brant, and blue-winged teal.

Most significant trends revealed by the inventory within the United States were increases in snow goose, scaup, black duck, mallard, scoter, and eider populations, and decreases in shovellers and mergansers.

Mallards were the most numerous species observed in the Pacific Flyway, followed by pintails, baldpates, snow geese, and Canada geese. The Pacific Flyway recorded an increase of 16 percent over Fish and Wildlife Service statistics for the 1948 winter, in total numbers of waterfowl in the United States. The flyway held 36 percent of the wintering waterfowl this year, the Service estimated.

Mallards were also the most numerous species in the Central Flyway, followed by snow geese, pintails, redheads, and baldpates. An increase of 2 percent for the 1949 winter over last year was estimated. Twenty percent of all wintering U. S. waterfowl were distributed in the Central Flyway, according to the inventory figures.

Within the Mississippi Flyway, mallards were also the top species in numbers seen. Next, were blue geese, pintails, green-winged teal, and coots. It was estimated that the Mississippi Flyway had an 18 percent increase over 1948 in the overall U. S. distribution of wintering waterfowl. The flyway held about 25 percent of the inventoried birds.

Most numerous species seen in the Atlantic Flyway were coots, followed by scaups, black ducks, Canada geese, and scoters and eiders. A 48 percent increase in total waterfowl was recorded over the previous year. Nineteen percent of the inventoried waterfowl were observed in the Atlantic Flyway.

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