

Blue Winged Teal

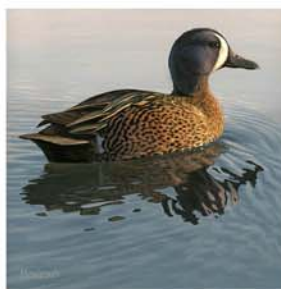
Anas discors

Male blue-winged teal have a slate gray head and neck, a black-edged white crescent in front of the eyes and a blackish crown. The breast and sides are tan with dark brown speckles and there is a white spot on the side of the rump. Most of the upper wing coverts are blue-gray, the secondaries form an iridescent green speculum and the underwing is whitish. The bill is black and the legs and feet are yellowish to orange. The male has a thin whistled "tsee tsee" uttered both in flight and when on water.



Female blue-winged teal have a brownish- gray head with a darker crown and eye stripe. The breast and sides are brown, the upper parts are olive brown, and the upper wing coverts are bluish, but less vibrant than the drake. The bill is gray-black and the legs and feet are dull yellow-brown. The female has a high-pitched squeak.

Blue-winged teal breed primarily in the northern prairies and parklands of central North America. Their relative abundance generally increases from west to east and north to south within the Prairie Pothole Region. Nesting habitat includes wetland areas within grasslands, such as shallow marshes, sloughs, flooded ditches and temporary ponds. Females change breeding sites from year to year in response to changing wetland conditions and lay an average of 10 eggs.



Blue-winged teal dabble to feed on the vegetative parts of aquatic plants (algae, duckweeds, pondweeds, etc.), seeds (sedges, pondweeds, grasses, etc.) and large amounts of aquatic invertebrates found in shallowly flooded wetlands.