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Ring-necked Duck *Aythya collaris*

This diving duck has a wide North American breeding distribution, from Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, east to British Columbia and south to New York and Iowa. A large proportion of Ring-necked Ducks winter in Gulf coast states.

Habitat. The Ring-necked Duck diet includes seeds and vegetative parts of aquatic plants and some animal matter, such as mollusks and insects (Johnsgard 1978).

In their native breeding range, nest sites are usually on mats of floating vegetation or on islands with sedges and other emergent plants habitats that also occur in Florida. Seven to 9 olive-brown eggs require 26 to 27 days incubation, and young can fly at 7 to 8 weeks of age (Johnsgard 1978).

Seasonal Occurrence. Most migrants arrive in Florida beginning in early October and leave in April and May.

Status. The Ring-necked Duck is one of the most common wintering ducks in Florida, often seen on lakes and ponds, especially in north and central Florida. Where no hunting occurs they become quite tame and tolerant of close approach by people. Many of the lakes in the city of Orlando are home for numerous pairs of Ring-necked Ducks between November and March. The species is hunted elsewhere in the state, and crippled birds are found during the summer months when healthy birds are on their breeding grounds in the northern United States and Canada (Howell 1932).

Goodwin (1980) reviewed breeding records of this species in Florida (Alachua, Brevard, and Broward counties) and concluded that the strong pair bond in Ring-necked Ducks, whereby 1 member of the pair will remain with a crippled member, probably accounts for the extralimital nesting that has occurred in the state.

During the Atlas period no confirmed breeding occurred, although a "possible" in Orange County and a "possible" in Pasco County were reported.

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Ring-necked Duck

