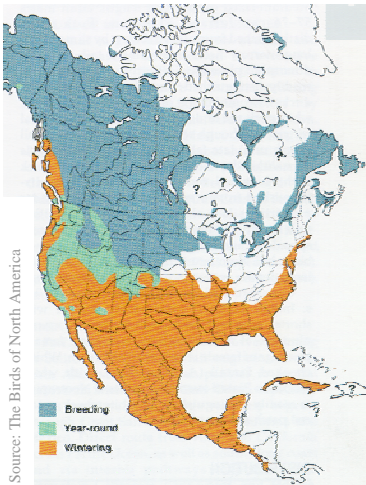




Ducks Unlimited Canada

Northern Pintail

FACT SHEET



Distribution

Breeding Range: In North America, the range is from Alaska and the Canadian Arctic south to the Prairie Pothole region of southern Canada and the northern Great Plains of the United States.

Winter Range: Pintail winter along the Pacific and Atlantic coasts from SE Alaska and SE Massachusetts south to Mexico and Central America.

Food Habits

Pintails dabble or “tip up” to feed on moist-soil and aquatic plant seeds, pond weeds, and aquatic invertebrates. They also feed on grains such as rice, wheat, corn and barley.

Breeding

Pair formation: Begins fall-early winter but only maintained to early incubation.

Nest site characteristics: Females nest in open areas typically on the ground in low or sparse vegetation and cropland stubble. Pintails tend to locate their nests farther from water than other ducks.

Eggs: Eggs range in colour from grey-buff to pale olive-green, are elliptical in shape and measure 53.6 x 38.2 mm.

Egg laying: One egg/day with clutches averaging 7-9 eggs.

Incubation: 22-24 days.

Renesting: Some pintails reneest after their initial nests are destroyed but few reneest more than twice.

Hatching: Eggs usually hatch within 24 hrs of one another and ducklings leave the nest within 24 hrs of hatching.

Broods: Ducklings feed without assistance and reach flight stage at 46-57 days.



Distinguishing Characteristics

The Northern Pintail (*Anas acuta*) is a medium sized duck with a slim profile, long narrow neck and pointed tail. **Males** have a chocolate brown head, white foreneck, blue-grey bill with black stripe and a long “pin” tail. Wings are grey with an iridescent green speculum. **Females** are mottled brown and have bluish bills with dark spots or mottling.



Tidbits

- Oldest recorded male in the wild: 21 yrs 4 mo - banded in California and recovered in Idaho
- Diseases: avian botulism and avian cholera most prevalent
- Predators include: fox, mink, coyote, hawks, and owls.