

WOOD DUCKS



In the State of Oregon

The wood duck (*Aix sponsa*) is a beautiful tree-nesting bird which frequents secluded inland ponds and streams bordered by woods throughout western Oregon. Many wood ducks migrate south before hunting season opens. From a hunting standpoint, the wood duck is not one of the important waterfowl species in Oregon.

HABITAT NEEDS

Food. The wood duck feeds on a wide assortment of seeds, nuts, acorns, and vegetable and animal matter. This duck may wander deep into woods in search of choice foods.

Choice plant foods consist of:

Acorns	Bulrush, saltmarsh	Filberts
Barley	Corn	Potomogeton, sago
Barnyardgrass	Crab apple, Oregon	Smartweed
		Wheat

Fair plant foods include:

Ash	Duckweed	Skunk cabbage
Coontail	Grape	Sudangrass
Dock	Sedge	

Animal foods comprise about ten percent of the diet and consist chiefly of ants, beetles, mollusks, and spiders.

Cover. This duck is found only where plenty of woody cover is available along streams and ponds. Unlike most ducks, it commonly perches in trees and is able to move very well on the ground.

Nesting. The wood duck habitually nests in trees where it prefers a hollow or natural cavity in the trunk. It readily accepts nesting boxes placed in suitable locations.

MANAGEMENT

If you live near a stream or pond in western Oregon, you can attract wood ducks by constructing nesting boxes and placing them on suitable trees. The nesting structures consist of an enclosed box 24 inches long, ten inches wide and ten inches deep, with a hole four inches in diameter on one side. For best results, the box may be attached to the trunk of a tree near water, 15 feet or more above the ground, and with the entrance hole facing the water. If the box is placed on a pole in a pond, the box may be only two or three feet above the water. Old trees along stream banks often contain natural cavities used for nesting by wood ducks. These trees should be preserved.

Leaflet F-207, which describes how to build a wood duck nest box, may be obtained from the Oregon State Game Commission.