

# Ringed Teal

*Callonetta leucophrys*

**Class:** *Aves*

**Order:** *Anseriformes*

**Family:** *Anatidae*

## Characteristics:

The male (drake) has a chestnut-colored back, pinkish breast with black speckles, and a black band running from the top of its head down its neck. Females (hens) have a brown back, brown and white blotched head. Both sexes have a distinct white & green patch on the wing. Interestingly, they maintain their colors year-round and do not display an [eclipse plumage](#) ([Beauty of Birds](#)).

## Behavior:

Only duck in the *Callonetta* genus, it is considered a dabbling duck (meaning it feeds on the surface) because of its feeding behavior and placed in the wood duck group because of its nesting and reproductive behaviors, but may also distantly be related to shelducks ([Ducks of the World](#)). While swimming, they hold their tails horizontal so it doesn't touch the water surface ([Rosamond Gifford Zoo](#)).

## Reproduction:

To attract the female, the male will preen himself and flash his colorful wing patch and swim around the female in a figure 8. Like other wood ducks, they form strong pair-bonds but these bonds are not necessarily life-long. They nest in hollow trees, often quite high off the ground, and the hen lays 6-12 eggs which she and the drake incubate for 29 days. Upon hatching, the chicks jump out of the nest, join their parents in the water, and rub their down against the parents' bodies, probably to acquire oil for personal waterproofing ([Happy Hollow Zoo](#)).

## Diet:

Wild: Aquatic plants, some invertebrates

Zoo: Scratch grains, flock raiser pellets, Seabird, greens

## Conservation:

None. While ringed teal are a wild species, they become quite tame in a domesticated setting and are readily bred in captivity.

## FYI:

The males exhibit more parental care than most other ducks which often allows for double-clutching, meaning the female produces more than one brood per year ([Happy Hollow Zoo](#)).



## **Range & Habitat:**

Wetlands of central South America



**Lifespan:** up to 15 years in captivity, unknown in the wild.

**Special Adaptations:** They have ridges along their bill (known as lamellae) which help them snip off thick aquatic vegetation.

## **IUCN Conservation Status:**

Least Concern

