

This resource is based on the following source:

Kale, H. W., II, B. Pranty, B. M. Stith, and C. W. Biggs. 1992. The atlas of the breeding birds of Florida. Final Report. Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, Tallahassee, Florida.

This resource can be cited as:

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. 2003, January 6. Florida's breeding bird atlas: A collaborative study of Florida's birdlife. <http://www.myfwc.com/bba/> (Date accessed mm/dd/yyyy).

Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata*

The wild Muscovy Duck is native to Central and South America (Hilty and Brown 1986). The feral form found in Florida is a heavier-bodied, domesticated duck. They have lived and flourished in Florida for many years, in close association with humans. The Atlas map shows them to be widespread and abundant in cities and towns, but none have been found living and breeding in a truly free, nonhuman-dependent state. In many places, these large, ungainly birds are considered pests due to aggressive panhandling and because they defecate in swimming pools and on patios and docks. They feed on aquatic plants, grasses, seeds, insects (Johnsgard 1978), and on human handouts, such as bread.

The Muscovy Duck breeds in urban and suburban lakes and on farms throughout the state. Apparently, no pair bond is established, at least among domesticated Muscovy Ducks. Matings are promiscuous and a form of rape where the male overpowers the female. They nest in tree cavities or on the ground. In suburban and urban areas, they nest under shrubs in yards or on condominium balconies. Clutch size is usually 8 to 15 eggs. The incubation period is about 30 to 35 days (Johnsgard 1975a, 1978).

Charles L. Geanangel

Muscovy Duck

