



MARBLED TEAL

ANSERIFORMES
Family: Anatidae
Genus: *Marmaronetta*
Species: *angustirostris*



Range: Southern Spain, Northern Africa through the Middle East to extreme Western China

Habitat: Freshwater or brackish shallow ponds and marshes with abundant vegetation in arid country.

Niche: Aquatic, diurnal, omnivorous

Wild diet: Seeds, roots, tubers, green aquatic plants and some aquatic invertebrates and worms.

Zoo diet:

Life Span: (Wild) 20 – 30 years
(Captivity)

Sexual dimorphism: Female slightly smaller with shorter crest and paler eye stripe. There are no seasonal differences.

Location in SF Zoo: Bird string between Lemur Café and Koala exhibit

APPEARANCE & PHYSICAL ADAPTATIONS:

Marbled teal have pale sandy-brown plumage with off-white spots. They have a dark eye-patch. Females have a greenish-yellow mark at the base of their bill. They have a long, narrow bill with a relatively long neck. Juveniles are similar but with more off-white blotches.

Weight: 6 – 16 oz

Length: 15 – 19 inches

Wingspan: 22 - 24 inches

Marbled teal were once classified as a dabbling duck but now is considered a diving duck. They feed by dabbling, diving and filtering mud to find food during the early morning and afternoon.

STATUS & CONSERVATION

Populations have greatly declined in the past century and the species is considered vulnerable as a result of destruction of their wetland habitat.

MARBLED TEAL

COMMUNICATION AND OTHER BEHAVIOR

Usually, marbled teal are relatively silent but can be gregarious birds, at times even when nesting. Displaying males make a squeaking “jeep” sound.

Outside the breeding season flocks are often small, although large wintering flocks have been reported in some areas. These birds feed mainly in shallow water by dabbling or up-ending, occasionally diving. They are partly migratory.

COURTSHIP AND YOUNG

Nests are often built in close proximity to one another, although they become increasingly spaced out as population density declines. They are well concealed and close to the water in a shallow depression in the ground, lined with grass and down. The male will abandon his mate early in the breeding cycle, leaving the female to rear the ducklings. The female lays 7 to 14 cream colored eggs.

Incubation: 25 – 27 days # of eggs: 7 – 14	Sexual Maturity: 1 - 2 years Fledging: 25 – 30 days
---	--

MISCELLANEOUS

Scientists had considered marbled ducks to be one of the dabbling ducks for many years, but the birds have been moved in with the pochards, due to their display behavior and lack of a speculum.

Teals are good swimmers and divers. However, they rarely dive for food, rather they dive to hide from a predator.

Sources:

Handbook of the Birds of the World Vol I © 1992, Lynx Edicions

Handbook of the Birds of Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa Vol I © 1978, pgs 548-552

<http://www.birdlife.org/>

<http://www.seaworld.org/>

Created 7/11