

Beloved species from Canada's wetlands

WOOD DUCK

Aix sponsa

- + Has no close relatives other than the mandarin duck, found in Asia.
- + Scientific name means “waterbird in bridal dress.”
- + The only North American duck to regularly raise two broods in a single season (in the southern part of its breeding range).
- + Has sharp claws for perching and climbing out of tree cavities, where it nests in holes from two to 15 feet deep.
- + A hen will lay eggs in other wood duck nests to be hatched and raised—a practice known as “egg dumping” or “brood parasitism.”
- + Ducklings jump to the ground from their cavity nest one day after hatching, safely jumping from heights of up to 291 feet.
- + Species neared extinction in the early 20th century but has rebounded and stabilized thanks to conservation efforts.

