

## [Wings Over Florida Bird Program](#)

Thanks for subscribing to receive Wings Over Florida bulletins from the Wildlife Viewing Section of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Each quarter, we will be sending out a seasonal highlight bulletin, which we hope will inform and encourage you to head outdoors and enjoy the birds and wildlife Florida has to offer.

### **Winter Waterfowl**

Millions of birds migrate to Florida in the fall. Some of them stay for a while before continuing south to the Caribbean Islands and South America BUT, many will remain in Florida for the winter. We often get asked...Where can I go to see winter ducks in Florida?

St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge, Fort Clinch State Park, Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge and Lake Apopka North Shore Restoration Area are all terrific sites on the [Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail](#) for finding ducks during the winter months.

Large flocks of ducks (up to 20 species) gather at [St. Marks NWR](#) during the winter. Up to 20 American Black Ducks can be present; this species of duck is very difficult to find elsewhere in Florida. The best option for enjoying them and all the other duck species that winter at the refuge is to join one of the monthly winter duck tram tours. Spaces fill up quickly; [call the refuge](#) for more details.

If it's sea ducks you're looking for, then head to [Fort Clinch State Park](#), at the north end of Amelia Island in Nassau County. Visit the fishing pier and search for Red-breasted Mergansers, Greater Scaup and all three species of scoter; White-winged Scoter is rare but both Black and Surf Scoter are recorded every winter. Rarities like Common Eider and Long-tailed Duck are sometimes spotted from the pier, and major rarities like Harlequin Duck have been recorded.

Blackpoint Wildlife Drive at [Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge](#) is one of the best locations in all of Florida to enjoy winter ducks. Large flocks of Northern Pintail and American Wigeon can be enjoyed at close range, and rarities like Eurasian Wigeon and Cinnamon Teal have been recorded. When a Bald Eagle or Peregrine Falcon flies over, the ducks take to the skies in a panic. Quite a sight! The best option for enjoying ducks at Blackpoint is to sign up for a field trip during the [Space Coast Birding & Wildlife Festival](#), which takes place in January.

Lake Apopka is renowned throughout America as being one of THE best places in Florida to watch birds. In winter, there are large numbers of ducks present. Both species of whistling duck are possible and flocks of Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler and Ring-necked Duck are often on show. The best options for enjoying ducks are to take part in [Birdapalooza](#), an annual festival that highlights the birds of Lake Apopka, and/or to spend the day on the [Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive](#), a must visit for all birders and wildlife viewers living in or visiting Central Florida.

There are of course many other [Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail](#) sites that provide great habitat for wintering ducks. In the coming months we will share more information on where you can find them AND other winter birds. As always we will continue to share lots of information in our monthly newsletter [Kite Tales](#), and on [Facebook](#).