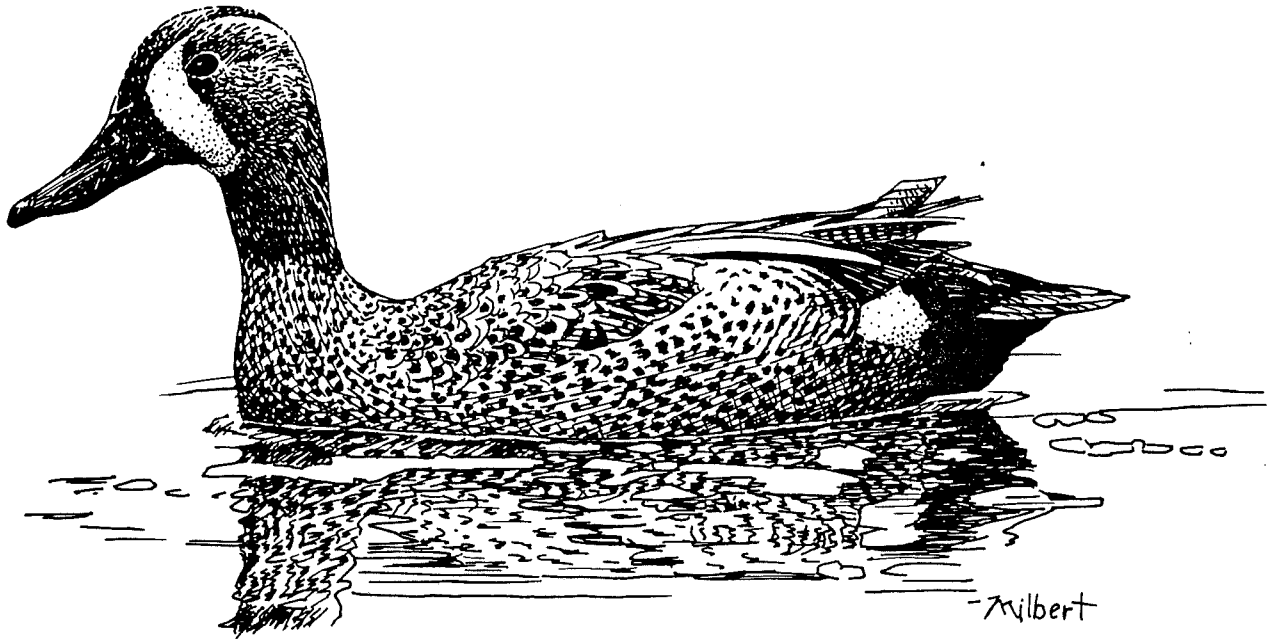


River Bend Naturalists Notebook

Presented by: RIVER BEND NATURE CENTER, Faribault, MN 55021

BLUE-WINGED TEAL



The Blue-winged Teal is the latest duck to arrive in the Spring, and the first to migrate south in the fall. Spring arrival in Rice County is between March 19th and April 19th, with April 1st the 21 year average. It winters in southern United States and southward to the coast of Brazil and Central Chile. It travels further south than any other North American duck.

The breeding range extends from western New York to British Columbia and northern Nevada. All of Minnesota is included in its breeding range, but it is most commonly found west of a line from St. Croix Park in Pine County to Lake-of-the-Woods.

Preferred nesting locations are dry sites

in undisturbed grasses and lightly grazed pastures. Also, alfalfa fields are often used in the southern two-thirds of Minnesota. The average height of vegetation at the nests is about 12 inches. The earliest nests are started in the first week of May. Most nests are started by the third week of May. Most nests that are started after June 1st are renests, the first one having been destroyed by storms, farming activities, predation and other factors in the environment. The clutch size averages about 10 eggs. Incubation lasts 21-24 days, averaging about 23 days. The Blue-winged Teal is a surface feeder, preferring small, shallow ponds, where there is much submerged & floating vegetation. -text by Orwin A. Rustad.