

Tufted Duck

Aythya fuligula

Bird · Resident · here all year



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A small, neat diving duck. Drakes are glossy black with brilliant white flanks, a bright yellow eye and a long drooping crest at the back of the head; females are dark brown with paler flanks and a much shorter tuft. Tufted ducks are the commonest diving duck on lochs, reservoirs and larger ponds around Dumfries, present all year with numbers boosted in winter.

BEHAVIOUR

Unlike mallard and teal they dive rather than dabble, disappearing for twenty seconds or so at a time to take molluscs, insect larvae and water plants from the bottom — zebra mussels are a favourite where they occur. They favour open, deeper water rather than reedy margins, and gather in loose rafts. Females nest in thick cover close to the waterline, later than most ducks.

WHEN TO SEE IT

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QUICK FACTS

FAMILY	Ducks, geese and swans (Anatidae)
SIZE	40–47 cm
UK STATUS	Green-listed

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