

How to identify Mallards.

This is a double sided colour poster to help correctly identify the Mallard species.

Invasive Species Identification Kit

Mallard

(*Anas platyrhynchos*)

Mallards are a threat to the survival of our South African waterfowl

Mallards are a particularly unwelcome invasive alien species in South Africa where they are known to hybridise with species from the genus *Anas* (nine species in Southern Africa), including the Yellow-billed Duck (*Anas undulata*), African Black Duck (*Anas sparsa*) and Cape Shoveler (*Anas smithii*).

Mallards pose a serious threat to indigenous duck species in many countries around the globe, with lessons learnt from countries such as Hawaii and New Zealand. These threats include competitive displacement, disturbing water quality and hybridisation. The problem is exacerbated when hybrid offspring are fertile, as in the case of the Mallard and Yellow-billed Duck.



Male (above)

- **Bill:** Lemon-yellow throughout the bill.
- **Legs and feet:** Orange.
- **Head and neck:** Shiny green head with a narrow white collar just above the chest.
- **Body:** Chestnut-coloured breast with light grey sides and wings. There is a purple patch on the lower wing.
- **Tail:** Males have a characteristic curled tail.



Female (left)

- **Bill:** Light grey bill, often with yellow infusions.
- **Legs and feet:** Orange.
- **Head and neck:** Light brown to grey with darker black streaks. There is often a distinct white eyebrow stripe above the eye with a darker stripe running through the eye.
- **Body:** The plumage is light brown with darker black infusions throughout the wings and body. On the lower wing is a dark blue speculum – a purple patch bordered by white.



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Identification of Mallards

Male, female and hybrid Mallard characteristics to look out for...



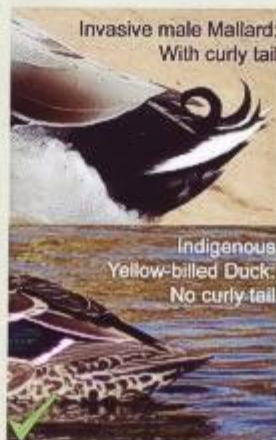
HYBRID MALLARDS: White quackers and ducks with orange-coloured feet are defined as Mallard hybrids.



TRUE MALLARD MALE: Green head, yellow bill and white collar, just above the chest.



TRUE MALLARD FEMALE: Look for the lighter eyebrow stripe and dark stripe along the eyes.



Invasive male Mallard:
With curly tail

Indigenous Yellow-billed Duck:
No curly-tail

CURL OR NO CURL:
Male (drake) Mallards have curly tails.

What does the law say?

Under the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (NEM:BA) No. 10 of 2004, Mallards are designated as a Category 1b Invasive Alien Species.

This legislation states that:

- No person may import, trade or breed Mallards.
- Mallards need to be managed as part of an invasive control plan.
- Once the control plan has been adopted in an area, no person may, without a permit, possess any Mallards.



Report Mallard sightings to www.ispot.org.za

Never mistake the Mallard for the following indigenous ducks:

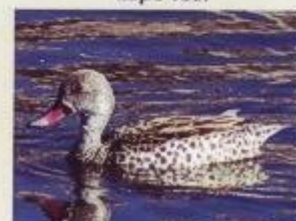
African Black Duck



Yellow-billed Duck



Cape Teal



Save our indigenous waterfowl