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## Waterfowl of North America: Name Derivations

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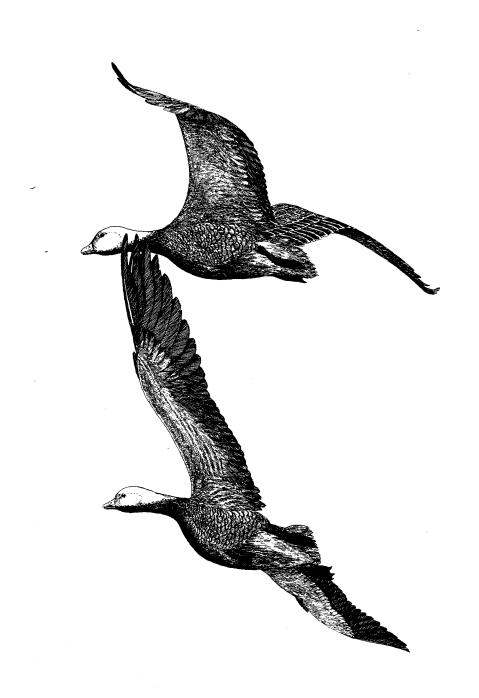


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## Name Derivations

(Excluding extralimital species and most subspecies unless these are sometimes considered full species)

Aix – from Greek, a kind of waterfowl mentioned by Aristotle.

sponsa – from Latin: bethrothed, as if in wedding dress.

Anas – from Latin: a kind of duck.

acuta – from Latin, referring to the sharp tail of the male.

americana — of America. The derivation of the vernacular name wigeon is from the French vigeon and perhaps in turn from the Latin vipio, a kind of crane.
 bahamensis — of the Bahama Islands.

carolinensis — of Carolina. The derivation of the vernacular name teal is unknown, but earlier English versions include "teale" and "tele."

clypeata - from Latin clypeum: shield-like, referring to the bill.

crecca – from Latin, formed like crex, to express the sound.

cyanoptera - from Greek kuanos: blue, and pteron: wing.

diazi – in honor of Augustin Diaz, Director of the Mexican Geographical and Exploring Commission, 1886.

discors - from Latin: discordant.

falcata – from Latin, referring to the sickle-shaped feathers of the male.

formosa - from Latin: beautiful.

fulvigula – from Latin fulvus: reddish, and gula: throat.

penelope – referring either to the mythological character Penelope, who was celebrated for her virtue, or more probably from the Latin penelops, a kind of duck mentioned by Pliny.

platyrhynchos – from Greek platys: broad, and rhynchos: bill. The vernacular name mallard is derived from the French malart, a male duck.

querquedula – from Latin: a kind of small duck.

rubripes – from Latin ruber: red, and pes: a foot, or red-footed.

strepera – from Latin streperus: noisy, obstreperous. The derivation of the vernacular name gadwall is unknown, the oldest known English variant being "gaddel."

Anser - from Latin, meaning a goose.

albifrons - from Latin albus: white, and frons: forehead.

caerulescens - from Latin: bluish.

canagicus – of the island of Kanaga or Kyktak (Aleutian Islands).

hyperborea – from Latin hyperboreus: beyond the north wind.

rossii — in honor of Bernard R. Ross, of the Hudson's Bay Company, who provided the specimens on which the species' name was based.

Aythya – from the Greek aithuia, a kind of water bird mentioned in Aristotle's Natural History.

affinis – from Latin: allied. The vernacular name scaup is from the Old French escalope and Old Dutch schelpe, and refers to the mollusks on which the birds sometimes feed.

americana - of America.

collaris - from Latin: collared.

fuligula - from Latin, diminutive of fulix or fulica: a coot, or perhaps from fuligo: soot.

marila – probably from the Greek marile: charcoal.

valisineria – after the wild celery Vallisneria, which in turn was named in honor of Antonio Vallisneri (1661–1730), Italian naturalist.

Branta — probably corrupted from brenthos or brinthos, the Aristotelian name of an unknown bird. The vernacular name brant (brent in Great Britain) may be similarly derived, or possibly is from the Welsh brenig, a limpet.

bernicla — apparently from the Old English bernekke, original meaning unknown.

canadensis - of Canada.

leucopsis – from Greek leucos: white, and opsis: appearance, referring to the white face. The vernacular name barnacle goose refers to the once-held belief that these birds originated from barnacles.

nigricans - from Latin: blackish.

Bucephala - from Greek: a broad forehead.

albeola – diminutive of Latin albus: white. The vernacular name bufflehead is a corruption of the earlier name "buffalo-headed duck." clangula – diminutive of Latin clangor: a noise.

islandica — of Iceland. The vernacular name is in honor of Sir John Barrow (1764–1848), one-time secretary of the British Admiralty.

Cairina – supposed to be derived from Cairo, in Egypt, thus a misnomer for this American form.

moschata – from Latin moschus: musk. The vernacular name muscovy is a corruption of musk duck.

Camptorhynchus – from Greek kamptos: flexible, and rhynchus: beak, referring to the leathery bill.

labradorius - of Labrador.

Chen - from Greek: a goose. Here considered part of Anser.

Clangula – diminutive of Latin clangor: a noise.

hyemalis – from Latin, pertaining to hiems, winter or wintry. The vernacular name oldsquaw is based on the garrulous behavior of this species.

Cygnus – from Latin: a swan.

buccinator – from Latin: a trumpeter.

columbianus – of the Columbia River.

olor – from Latin: a swan.

Dendrocygna – from Latin dendron: a tree, and cygnus: a swan.

arborea - from Latin, pertaining to trees.

autumnalis – from Latin, meaning the period of harvest.

bicolor - from Latin: of two colors.

Histrionicus – from Latin, meaning histrionic and relating to histrio, a stageplayer.

Lampronetta – from Greek lampros: shining or beautiful, and netta: a kind of duck. Here considered part of Somateria.

Lophodytes – from Greek lophos: a crest, and dutes: a diver. Here considered part of Mergus.

Mareca – the Brazilian name for a kind of teal. Here considered part of Anas.

- Melanitta from melas, melanos: black, and netta: a duck. The vernacular name scoter is possibly from the Dutch word koet, or perhaps is a variant of "scout," which is in local use in Great Britain for scoters as well as guillemots and razorbill auks.
  - deglandi in honor of Dr. C. D. Degland (1787–1865), French naturalist.fusca from Latin: dusky.
  - nigra from Latin niger: black.
  - perspicillata from Latin: conspicuous or spectacular.
- Mergus from Latin: a diver.
  - albellus diminutive of Latin albus: white.
  - cucullatus from Latin: wearing a hood.
  - merganser from Latin mergus: a diver, and anser: a goose. The vernacular name goosander is probably from the Old Norse Gas and \phind, meaning goose-duck.
- Oidemia from Greek oidema, Latin oedema: a swelling, in reference to the shape of the bill. Here considered part of Melanitta.
- Olor from Latin: a swan. Here considered part of Cygnus.

- Oxyura from Greek oxy: sharp, and oura: tail, referring to the pointed rectrices.
  - dominica of Santo Domingo.
  - jamaicensis of Jamaica (from which the species was first described).
- Philacte from Greek philos: loving, and akte: the seashore. Here considered part of Anser.
- Polysticta from Greek poly: many, and sticte: spotted.
  - stelleri in honor of G. W. Steller (1709–1746), German naturalist on Bering's expedition to the arctic for Russia.
- Somateria from Greek soma, somatos: the body, and erion: wool or down. The vernacular name eider is derived from the Icelandic ejdar, used there for the common eider.
  - fischeri in honor of G. von Waldheim Fischer (1771–1853), Russian naturalist.
  - mollissima superlative of Latin mollis: very soft.
  - spectabilis from Latin, meaning conspicuous or spectacular.
- Spatula from Latin, meaning spoonlike. Here considered part of Anas.