

## Steller's Eiders Need Your Help - Do Not Shoot Them!

The Steller's Eider is a small sea duck that can be found along the Southern Alaska Peninsula, Kodiak Island, and Cook Inlet from fall through spring. While it may appear numerous in lagoons and bays where you hunt, the Alaska-breeding population is actually threatened with extinction in North America. Although sport hunting of Steller's Eiders is closed, misidentification has resulted in the accidental shooting of birds during fall and winter. Please take a few moments to review the proper identification of Steller's Eiders and when you should expect to see these sea ducks in your area.

### Identification – *If in Doubt, Don't Shoot!*

Steller's Eiders are one-third to one-half the size of other eiders. Adults of both sexes have wings with blue patches bordered by white and their slightly pointed tails are usually carried clear of the water. They fly low over water and when in flight have a rapid wing beat that produces a loud whistle, similar to that of Goldeneyes.



#### Males -

##### Winter to Mid- Summer:

- Chestnut breast and belly
- White head and shoulders
- Greenish patch on rear of head and between eyes and bill
- Black on throat and back
- Small black eye patches
- Black spot on breast
- Upper surface of the wing near the body has iridescent blue and white patch



#### Females and Juveniles – Year-round:

- Mottled dark cinnamon brown
- Pale eye ring
- Iridescent blue and white patch on wing



#### Males – Late Summer and Fall:

- Mottled dark cinnamon brown
- Pale eye ring
- Upper surface of wing near the body is white



## When Are Steller's Eiders in Your Area?

### Kodiak Island

October-April



Photo: Tim Bowman, USFWS

### Alaska Peninsula

August-April

## Where Are Steller's Eiders Found?

Steller's Eiders are often found in dense flocks, diving synchronously or resting on the water along shore.

**Alaska Peninsula:** Seen in small to large flocks in shallow marine waters. Flocks congregate in protected lagoons and bays, particularly at Nelson and Izembek Lagoons.

**Kodiak Island:** Flocks congregate in protected lagoons and bays, as well as along rocky headlands islets.

## Similar Looking Species - *If in Doubt, Don't Shoot!*



Photo: Tim McCabe



Photo: Tim Bowman, USFWS



Photo: Tim Bowman, USFWS



### **Mallard**

- Also has blue and white wing patches
- Females can be confused with female Steller's eiders

### **Harlequin Ducks**

- Females have 3 white face spots and lack wing patches

### **Scaup**

- Females can be confused with female Steller's Eiders

### **Long-tailed Ducks (Oldsquaw)**

- Females could be confused with molting male Steller's Eiders
- Males (photo) can be confused with male Steller's Eiders but Long-tailed Duck males lack blue and white wing patches



### **Let's Work Together to Ensure the Survival of the Steller's Eider!**

Please report all migratory bird hunting violations to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Law Enforcement, (907) 786-3311. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.