

Ducks

Eurasian teal / *Anas crecca* / Kogamo / コガモ

Eurasian teals breed in the summer in Siberia and migrate southward in winter, some of them to the coastal inlets, rivers, and lagoons of Amami-Oshima. One of the smallest ducks (34 to 38 centimeters long), this bird gets its name from the blue-green (teal) color of the patch on the adult male that runs from the eyes to the back of the neck. The head is maroon, while the body is mostly speckled gray and brown with a white stripe down the side. The bill and legs are black. The birds subsist on a plant diet of algae and aquatic plants. They pair at the end of wintering and travel north together to their breeding grounds.

Eastern spot-billed duck / *Anas zonorhyncha* / Karugamo / カルガモ

This is a very common dabbling duck, a term for a freshwater duck that feeds in shallow waters, both on the surface and by tipping headfirst into the water to graze on aquatic plants. These ducks are partially migratory but are generally resident year-round on Amami-Oshima, where they are found at river mouths, in rice paddies, and in mangroves. They breed in fall and winter. Though the eastern spot-billed duck is less colorful than the mallard, the orange tip of its bill and the orange legs stand out against the plain dark-brown back, pale head, and tan breast and belly. When the bird is in flight, a patch of blue is visible on its wings. It is usually seen in pairs or in small flocks.