

# Species Fact Sheets

**Order:** Anseriformes  
**Scientific Name:** Anas sibilatrix

**Family:** Anatidae  
**Common Name:** Chiloe Wigeon

**AZA Management:**  Green  Yellow  Red  None

**Photo (Male):**



**Photo (Female):**



**NATURAL HISTORY:**

**Geographic Range:** Europe  Asia  North America  Neotropical   
 Africa  Australia  Other  [Click here to enter text.](#)

**Habitat:** Forest  Desert  Grassland  Coastal   
 Riverine  Montane  Other  [Click here to enter text.](#)

**Circadian Cycle:** Diurnal  Crepuscular  Nocturnal  Other  [Click here to enter text.](#)

**Cold Tolerance:** To 70° F  To 60° F  To 50° F  To 40° F   
 To 30° F  To 20° F  Other  Can be maintained outdoors as long as they have access to moving water to keep their feet from freezing

**Heat Tolerance:** To 30° F  To 50° F  To 70° F  To 90° F   
 To 110° F  Other  Can be kept outdoors as long as water and shade are available

**Diet:** Frugivore  Carnivore  Piscivore  Insectivore   
 Nectivore  Omnivore  Folivore  Other (Add Below)

**Captive Dietary Needs:**

Captives can be fed commercial waterfowl diet, supplemented with greens, insects/worms, fish, and vitamins and minerals.

**Life Expectancy in the Wild:** Males: unknown Females: unknown

**Life Expectancy in Captivity:** Males: 20 Years Females: 20 Years

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## BREEDING INFORMATION:

**Age at Sexual Maturity:** Males: 1 Year Females: 1 Year

**Courtship Displays:** Chin-lifting, vocalizations, following each other in the water (male swims ahead looking backwards at female), preening

**Nest Site Description:** The nest is built on the ground, hidden in grasses or other vegetation, usually located some distance from the water. Captives will use nest boxes.

**Clutch Size, Egg Description:** 5-9 pale buff-colored eggs, measuring 5.8 x 4 centimeters, weighing 53 grams.

**Incubation Period:** 24-26 Days

**Fledgling Period:** 6-8 Weeks

**Parental Care:** Eggs incubated by female alone, but are cared for by both parents upon hatching. Captives will sometimes double-brood, with the male carrying for the first brood by himself. Males have raised broods in the absence of females.

**Chick Development:** Chicks leave the nest shortly after hatching, and are able to feed themselves with invertebrates.

## CAPTIVE HABITAT INFORMATION:

**Social Structure in the Wild:** Pairs or small flocks during the breeding season, larger congregations during the rest of the year, sometimes gathering in the hundreds or thousands

**Social Structure in Captivity:** Pairs or small flocks

**Minimum Group Size:** 1.1 or 0.2

**Maximum Group Size:** Small Flock

**Compatible in Mixed Species Exhibits:** Yes **Comments:** Have been mixed successfully with many other waterfowl species, as well as penguins, wading birds, rodents, and small primates.

**Optimal Habitat Size:** 100 Square Feet per Pair

**Management Challenges:** Generally a hardy species which does well in mixed-species aviaries, but during the breeding season may bully even larger birds. They will hybridize readily with other waterfowl.

## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Also known as the southern wigeon, the Chiloe wigeon is named after Chiloe Island, part of the Chiloe Archipelago found off the coast of Chile. The species is found throughout the southern cone of South America – from extreme southeastern Brazil south to Tierra del Fuego – as well as on several sub-Antarctic Islands. They are one of the few waterfowl species reported from Antarctica. The species is largely sedentary, though individuals in the southern-most portion of the species range may make short-range migrations to the north in order to escape winter weather.

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A somewhat stocky duck, body length is 43-54 centimeters, with a wingspan of 75-86 centimeters; body weight is 828-939 grams. Unlike other wigeons, the males and females look alike, though the male is slightly brighter and has a somewhat larger head. Also unlike other wigeons, the plumage is mostly constant year round. The flanks are chestnut-colored, with black-and-white back and wings. Most of the head is an iridescent green, except for the off-white face and the blue-grey beak. When in flight, white shoulder patches are visible. Juveniles resemble duller versions of their parents. There is no definitive eclipse plumage. There are no recognized subspecies.

Chiloe wigeons are found in freshwater lakes, wetlands, and slow-moving rivers. Primarily grazers, they often feed on grasses and sedges along the shore, but will also dabble for submerged vegetation. They will occasionally also feed on invertebrates and small fish.

Unlike many duck species, pairs of Chiloe wigeons will form long-term bonds. Breeding takes place in August or September; the wigeons normally nest alone, but will sometimes nest in small groups. During the non-breeding season, they can be extremely social, found in flocks of thousands. The female incubates the 5-9 eggs for 24-26 days, though the male will assist her in caring for the ducklings after they hatch. Sexual maturity is reached during the first year. The species is highly vocal, and the species name "sibilatrix" refers to the male's whistling call; females often respond with honks or growls.

Classified as a species of Least Concern by the IUCN, the Chiloe wigeon is still common across much of its range. There has been some small decline, however, due to habitat loss and hunting, as well as predation from invasive American minks. The species first appeared in waterfowl collections in 1873; it takes well to captivity and breeds readily, and is now well established in collections around the world.

Some authorities place this species in the genus *Mareca*, along with the American wigeon, the Eurasian wigeon, and the now-extinct Amsterdam wigeon.

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