

# Arctic in Maine: I Spy Eider Ducks!

You don't have to head far north into the Arctic to see some amazing Arctic birds. In the spring, the Common Eider, a large northern sea duck often found in Arctic waters, heads into the coves of Maine to breed.

The female Eider lines her nest with downy feathers from her own breast to keep her eggs warm. When the ducklings hatch they are gathered into large groups or "crèches." Adult duck "babysitters" can look after 100 ducklings or more in a single crèche.



Fuertes, Louis Agassiz, *King Eider, Northern Eider, Harlequin Duck, Eider*, 1925. Silver gelatin, pigment on glass. Gift of Donald and Miriam MacMillan.

*King Eider male*

*King Eider female*

*Northern Eider male*

*Common Eider male*

*Common Eider female*

*Harlequin Ducks (far left)*

## Spotting Common Eiders: what to look for

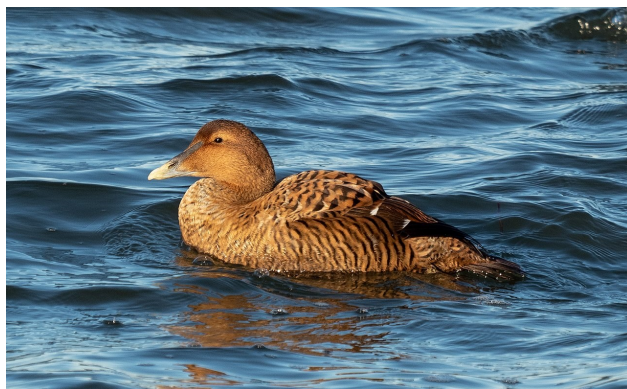


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### Males:

- white back, black underside & cap
- long yellow or orange-yellow bill
- light green on back of the neck

### Females:

- brown all over
- long black bill
- black "barring" pattern

**TIP:** [Male Common Eiders have a gentle "cooing" call](#) that carries for long distances. You often hear them before you see them!



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