

Watola, G. 2011. The Discovery of New Zealand's Birds. (3rd Edition in prep.)
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Mallard: p 226.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos* Linnaeus 1758
1910 Southland
September 1971 Norfolk Island

Mallards from Australian introductions were released as early as 1867, although none persisted until the Southland Society introduced 1350 birds between 1910 and 1918 (Long 1981).

Oliver (2001) stated that Acclimatisation Societies made many liberations up to about 1918 but were not particularly successful until they were intensively bred from American stock and liberated in the 1930s and 1940s.

By 1949 Mallards made up 52% of the annual duck take in the shooting season in the Wellington district, up from 5% in 1931. Mallard were first recorded on Macquarie Island in August 1949. Three were seen on Chatham Island in December 1952. 400 were recorded on Palmerston North lakes in May 1954. A Norfolk Island banded bird was recorded in New Zealand in 1982.

“Mallards have now become the most numerous of all water birds and are widely distributed from town ponds to outlying islands. The population has been as high as perhaps 5,000,000 but has declined in recent years due to farm runoff and avian botulism, something which has put the New Zealand Fish and Game Council at loggerheads with farmers ” (Oliver 2005).

