A photograph showing a person's hand feeding a duck in a pond. The duck is reaching up with its beak open, and the hand is holding a piece of bread. Other ducks are visible in the water in the background. The water is greenish, suggesting algae or pollution.

Negative Impacts of Feeding Waterfowl

TEXAS
PARKS &
WILDLIFE

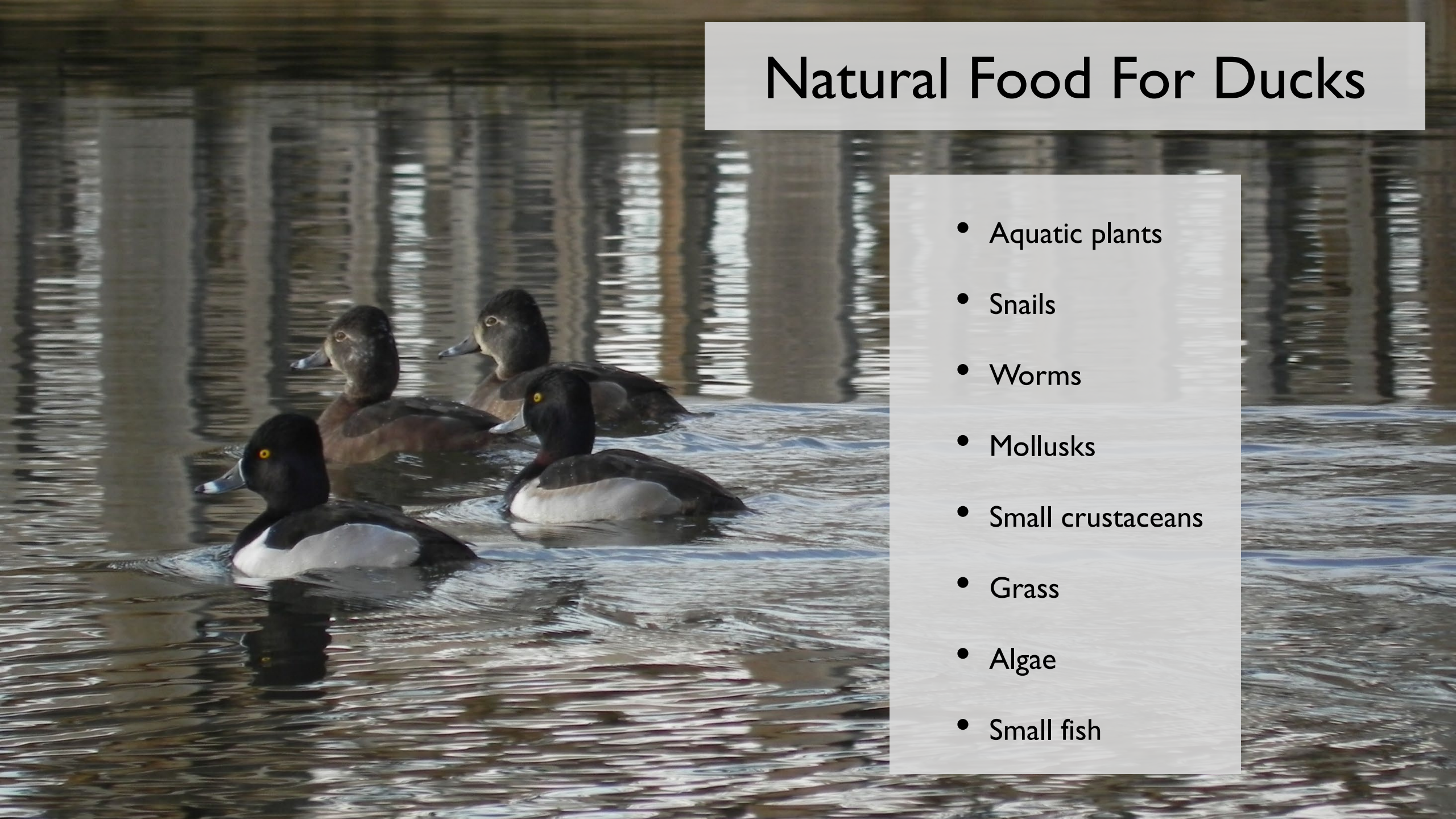
Rachel Richter
Urban Wildlife Biologist
Texas Parks and Wildlife

Ducks and geese should NOT eat...



Natural Food For Ducks

- Aquatic plants
- Snails
- Worms
- Mollusks
- Small crustaceans
- Grass
- Algae
- Small fish



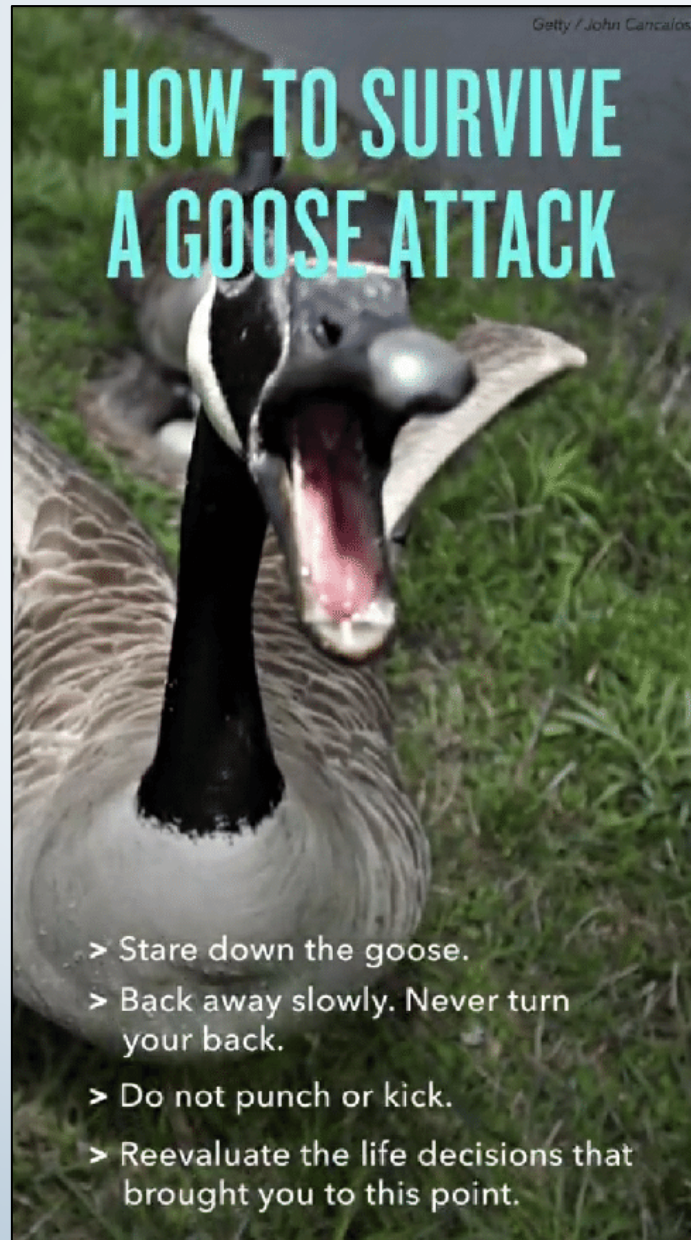
Human food is not
healthy for wildlife

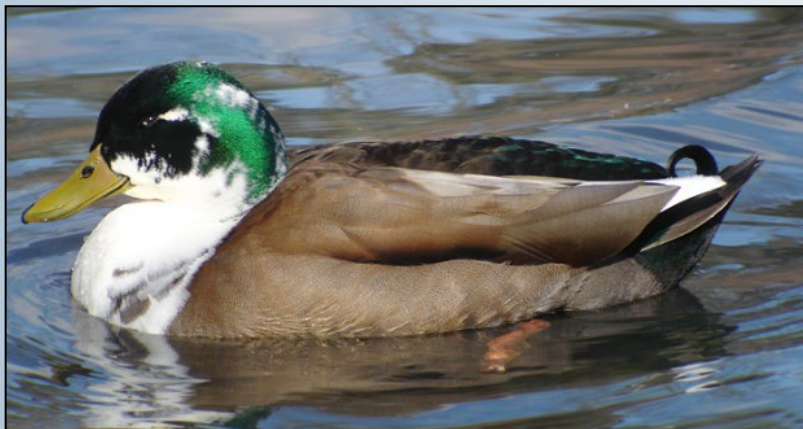


Increased Disease Spread



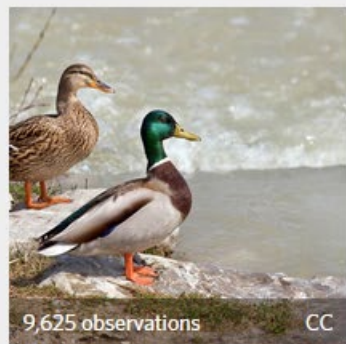
Habituation





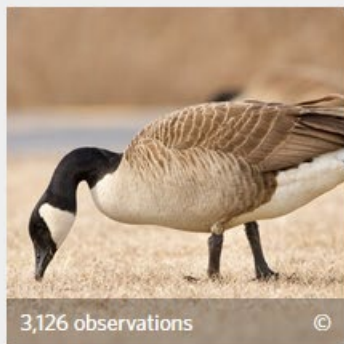
Invasive Species

Native Duck Species



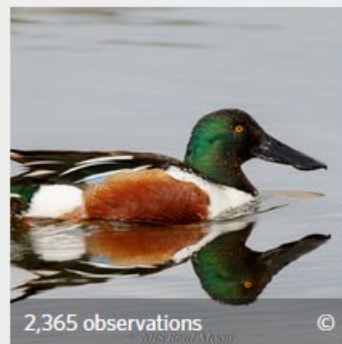
9,625 observations CC

Mallard
(*Anas platyrhynchos*)



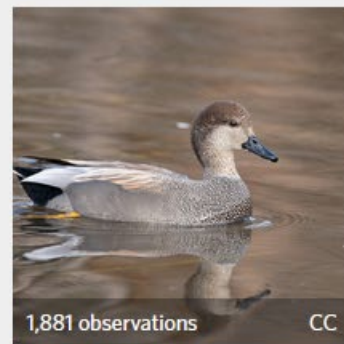
3,126 observations ©

Canada Goose
(*Branta canadensis*)



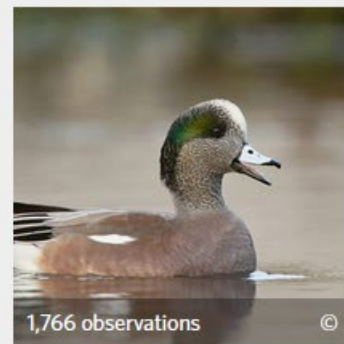
2,365 observations ©

Northern Shoveler
(*Spatula clypeata*)



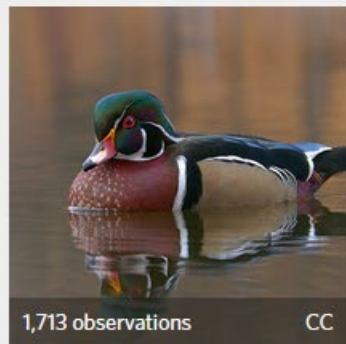
1,881 observations CC

Gadwall
(*Mareca strepera*)



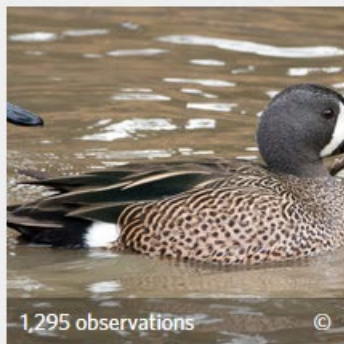
1,766 observations ©

American Wigeon
(*Mareca americana*)



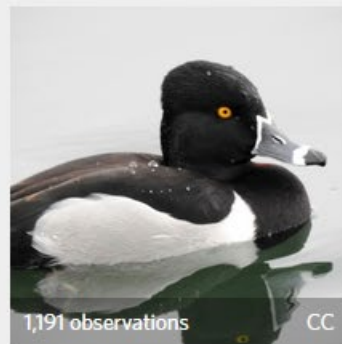
1,713 observations CC

Wood Duck
(*Aix sponsa*)



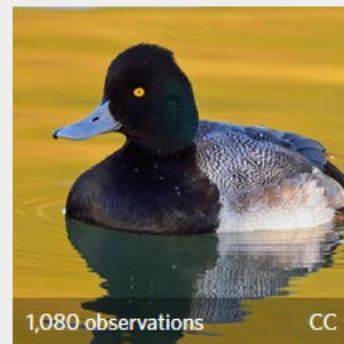
1,295 observations ©

Blue-winged Teal
(*Spatula discors*)



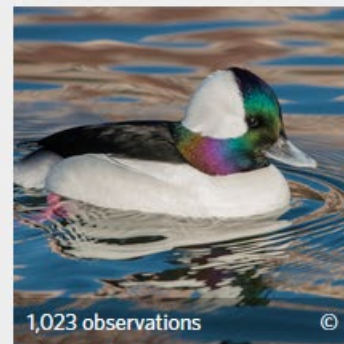
1,191 observations CC

Ring-necked Duck
(*Aythya collaris*)



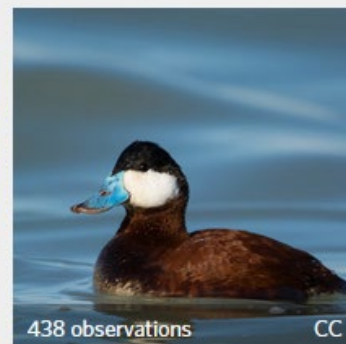
1,080 observations CC

Lesser Scaup
(*Aythya affinis*)



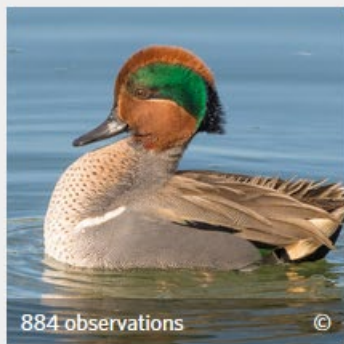
1,023 observations ©

Bufflehead
(*Bucephala albeola*)



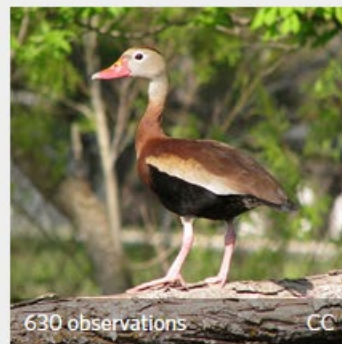
438 observations CC

Ruddy Duck
(*Oxyura jamaicensis*)



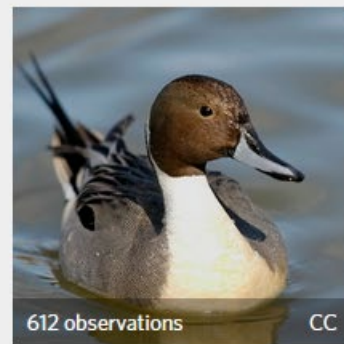
884 observations ©

Green-winged Teal
(*Anas crecca*)



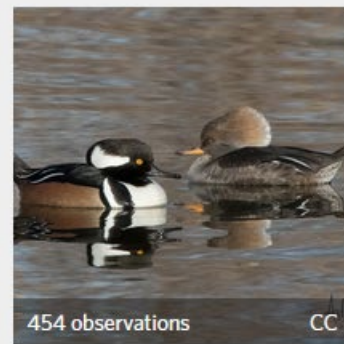
630 observations CC

Black-bellied Whistlin...
(*Dendrocygna autumnalis*)



612 observations CC

Northern Pintail
(*Anas acuta*)



454 observations CC

Hooded Merganser
(*Lophodytes cucullatus*)



Non-target Species

Habitat Degradation



Water Quality



Photo Credit: KSAN



Management Options

- Outreach and education
- Feeding ordinances



But what about “healthy” foods?





Management Options for Non-native Waterfowl

- No state regulations for non-native waterfowl
- Oiling or addling eggs
- Trap and remove

Alternatives

- Birdwatching
- Contribute to citizen science projects
 - iNaturalist, eBird
- Photography
- Learn about wildlife
- Improve your local park



Promote Healthy Habitats



Questions?

TEXAS
PARKS &
WILDLIFE

Rachel Richter
Urban Wildlife Biologist
Texas Parks and Wildlife