



MUSCOVY DUCKS

In the City of New Port Richey, especially around Orange Lake, Muscovy ducks have become a common sight despite not being

native to Florida. These ducks are incredibly prolific, leading to rapid population growth. This often sparks different opinions among residents- some enjoy their presence, while others find them problematic. Have you noticed the extensive population near our park? Or maybe you live near the lake or the river, and they are starting to invade your property?

WHAT IS THE CITY DOING?

After thorough research, it has been discovered that hiring trappers is an ineffective, short-term solution for managing the Muscovy duck population. Instead, removing newly-laid eggs has been proven to be the most humane and effective way to reduce the invasive duck population and prevent them from reaching nuisance levels. *That's exactly what we're doing!* City crews identify the invasive species eggs, and remove them from City property.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Are you frustrated by the mess that they are making on your driveway or sidewalk? Are they nesting on your property?

You can remove eggs from your property too!



OUR MISSION:
TO PROVIDE RESPONSIVE,
PROFESSIONAL, AND
COURTEOUS SERVICE
TO THE PUBLIC

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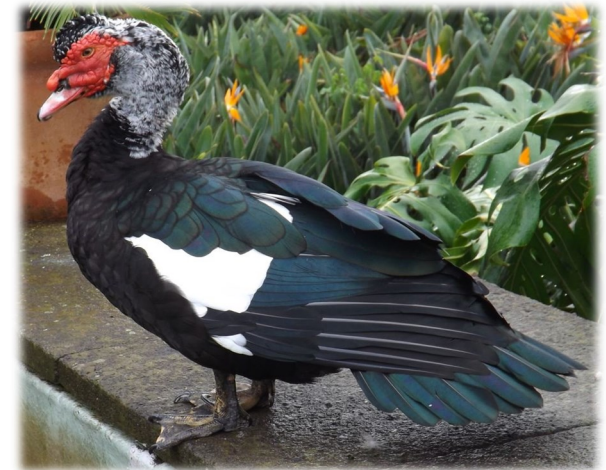
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MUSCOVY DUCK DILEMMA:

STRIVING FOR
COMMUNITY HARMONY
AND
WILDLIFE BALANCE

WHAT YOU CAN DO AS A
HOMEOWNER!



 NEW PORT RICHEY
PUBLIC WORKS

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QUICK FACTS

- Muscovy ducks have a long lifespan, averaging 8-12 years.
- They breed 2 to 3 times a year, from August to May.
- A female lays a clutch of 8-16 eggs, but is capable of laying up to 28, which are then incubated for 35 days.
- Ducklings become independent between 60-70 days.
- Muscovy ducks are considered an invasive species.
- They have sharp claws and dabbling tendencies, which means they can damage tarps and plants, leave droppings, eat beneficial insects, and create nests in unusual places.
- It is illegal to release Muscovy ducks into the wild.
- Generally quiet birds, they may wag their tails persistently if excited or threatened and males might make a hissing or puffing noise.

EGG IDENTIFICATION

- General Description: Large and elongated with creamy white color. They lack spotting and have a unique texture.
- Size: 2.5"-3.5" long and 1.9"-2.4" wide. They are larger than most duck eggs.
- Shape: Elongated, oval shape with one end distinctly more pointed.
- Color: The shell is creamy white without spots or markings.
- Shell: It has a unique coarse, bumpy texture compared to smooth duck egg shells.



LOCATING NESTS

Muscovy ducks often nest in vegetation like liriopse, which provides soft protection. Occasionally, they choose prickly plants, usually identifiable by a wide opening for entry and exit. These ducks favor nesting spots next to solid surfaces like buildings, walls, fences, or in corners that offer two sides of protection. Ideal nesting sites include a human-made barrier to prevent predators from one side while allowing the mother a clear view of the surroundings. You may also find Muscovy ducks nesting in planters, tree cavities, and tree root systems.

EGG DEVELOPMENT

Muscovy ducks are remarkable nesters, capable of laying up to 28 eggs per clutch and breeding as many as three times annually. Typically, a female Muscovy will lay one egg daily, allowing them to accumulate in the nest until she completes her clutch. Once all eggs are laid, she begins the incubation process, spending most of her day sitting on them. During this time, she seldom leaves the nest, only briefly departing for essential tasks like drinking water or relieving herself.

EGG REMOVAL METHOD

When removing Muscovy duck eggs, it's best to wait until the female has laid all the eggs in her clutch. Premature removal can cause her to relocate to a more hidden spot and continue laying. Eggs that are cool to the touch without a female present are not ready for removal. If the number of eggs hasn't increased over three days, it's safe to remove them. Frequent visits to nesting sites help monitor changes in the number of eggs. Warm eggs or a nest with a female sitting on them indicate she has finished laying, and the eggs can be removed.

When approaching nesting females, do so slowly and gently. It's recommended to wear gloves or use a soft bag over your hand. Gently reach behind the female from under her webbed feet and remove the eggs one or two at a time. After ensuring all eggs are removed, count them and place them in a bag. Remember, ducks should never be harmed.



EGG DISPOSAL

Eggs should be frozen or kept as cold as possible to ensure that development has been stopped before disposing of them. Eggs can be discarded in the trash. Eggs should never be disposed of in waterways or down drains. Thoroughly wash your hands after you have finished handling the eggs.

