

Plumage Characteristics of Female Black Scoters

Hatch Year (HY)
hatched previous summer



No markings on bill

Second Year (SY)
1+ year old, winter plumage

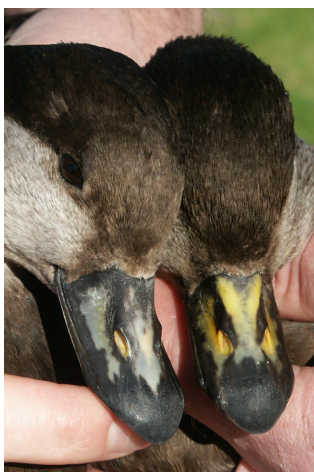


Some mottling on bill, usually pale (not yellow) on both upper and undersides

After Second Year (ASY)
>2 yrs old, winter plumage



Heavy yellowish mottling on bill on both upper and undersides



Bill markings of Second Year (Left) and After Second Year (Right) Females

Plumage Characteristics of Female Black Scoters

Hatch Year (HY)
hatched previous summer



Light breast and belly

Second Year (SY)
1+ year old, winter plumage



Dark breast and belly

After Second Year (ASY)
>2 yrs old, winter plumage



Dark breast and belly



**Notched tail feathers (OK through February at least).
Bursa depth greater than 15 mm**



**No notched tail feathers (but may be worn and ragged). Bursa
depth greater than 5 mm**



**No notched tail feathers (but may be worn and ragged). Bursa
depth <5 mm or absent**

Plumage Characteristics of Male Black Scoters

Hatch Year (HY)
hatched previous summer

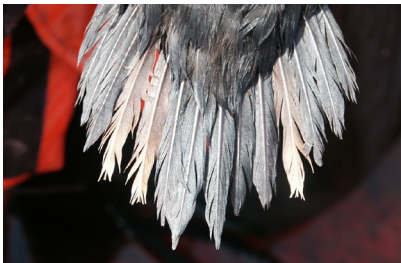


Head and body plumage is brown, possibly molting into black. Bill is pale to bright yellow without distinct knob at base; nares more horizontal than in AHY male

After Hatch Year (AHY)
>1 yrs old



Head and body plumage is black. Bill is bright yellow with a distinct knob at base; nares are more vertical than in HY male



Notched tail feathers usually seen on HY males through February and possibly into April, may be intermixed with new or emerging tail feathers.

Bursal depth > 10 mm



Belly of HY male (left) is light, possibly with some darker feathers molting in chest. Plumage of AHY (right) is uniformly black.



Outermost primary feather of AHY male is highly attenuated (narrower along distal half).

Bursal depth is > 10 mm in SY birds and < 10 mm in ASY birds, but plumage is identical, so without knowing bursal depth, they should be called AHY