

## Welcome to the world? Breeding alien bird species in Flanders

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Alien (exotic) species that breed originally in the Americas, Asia, Africa and Australia are becoming increasingly common in larger areas of Flanders (Belgium). During the most recent breeding bird atlas project (2000-2002) no less than 12 such species have been recorded as confirmed breeders. Population numbers of waterbirds as Canada Goose, Egyptian Goose and Barnacle Goose reach several hundreds to more than 1500 breeding pairs. The species are distributed over the whole of the region. Australian Black Swan, Magelanic Goose, Bar-headed Goose, Wood Duck and Mandarin Duck are still present in low numbers but populations are increasing slowly and their breeding area is extending. Ring-necked Parakeets have been mainly concentrated around Brussels but are now also extending their breeding range. Since 1994, population numbers of these species are assessed by a long-term monitoring scheme. Species trends are presented and problems of accuracy of the counts discussed, together with the possible impact on nature and results of management actions.