

SEARCH

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Compared to other birds such as the peacock or the eagle, the duck seems like a rather unimpressive and unremarkable fowl. Appearances are often deceptive, however, as this creature has more symbolism attached to it than might be expected.



In China, ducks, particularly Mandarin ducks (famous for their vivid multicolored plumage) are auspicious creatures indeed. Their most famous meaning is as a symbol of martial happiness and fidelity. That meaning can display itself in multiple ways: for example, duck imagery may appear on Chinese wedding invitations, and it is considered good luck to have at least one duck dish served at a wedding feast. Also, the imagery of two ducks physically entwined is seen as a metaphor for sexual congress in Chinese culture.

On a slightly less esoteric level, the duck has also been viewed as a bird of clairvoyance in some instances. Like its cousin the goose, the duck is a migratory bird whose actions and movements are strictly determined by the seasons. As such, the appearance (or absence) of ducks in certain places and at certain times is typically a herald of changing circumstances (i.e. seasons). The Celts often depicted ducks paired with a solar wheel or disc to demonstrate its affinity to the cycles of the natural world.

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In contrast to its prize place in Chinese culture, the duck has also acquired some rather negative symbolism in parts of the Western world. In the 13th century, Pope Gregory IX preached that ducks were the embodiment of Asmodeus, a demon that inspired lust, and it was during his reign that the foundation was laid for a papal inquisition that really brought down the hammer of religious authority on the population. Today, thankfully, much of this negativity has disappeared, and most of us know ducks simply as the playful creatures that we see and feed in parks around the world.

Categories: [Animal Symbolism \(/category/13\)](#), [Chinese Symbols \(/category/47\)](#).

Duck (/symbol/2230) is part of the [Christian Symbols \(/group/5\)](#) group.

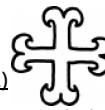
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ΑΩ
(/symbol/392)

Alpha and
Omega
(/symbol/392)



Cross
(/symbol/2775)



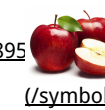
Anchor
(/symbol/2776)



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Apocalyptic
Trees
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Báikē
quǎnshū
(simplified)
(/symbol/3015)



Cat
(/symbol/2146)

百合
(/symbol/2989)

Bǎihé
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Bamboo
(/symbol/2231)

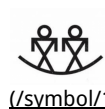
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Symbol
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Boar
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Bear
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