

VareseNews

“Our” Mandarin duck has flown to Central Park

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“Our” mandarin has gone on a tour to Central Park, and New York has gone crazy over it.

The story told by the Italian newspaper “**Il Post**”, is a lovely one, and, in addition to being curious, teaches us one thing: perhaps we in Varese Province do not always know how to make the most of the beauty that “rains down on us “from above.

What happened is, on 10 October, a number of visitors to the park found a beautiful specimen of the mandarin duck in one of the ponds. Why are we talking about this? If you don’t have a good memory, we can help you.

In January 2016, a VareseNews reader took a picture of this duck in Schiranna Park, a male (it is known that, in nature, the males use their colours to charm the females). It was small in size and unmistakable, because of its colourful plumage and eye-catching decorations, such as the fans of filamentous feathers, which comes down from its cheeks, forming a sort of gag, and the characteristic orange and white “sails” that stand up in the middle of its back. **The species is prevalent in China, Japan and Korea, but rare in the rest of the world.**

A pilgrimage to Schiranna began, and dozens of pictures were sent to the newspaper. **We limited ourselves to this, but the Americans have done much more.**

“On Twitter, its movements are recorded every day, by the Manhattan Bird Alert, the account dedicated to the birds of Manhattan, and the duck even has a personal profile, the **Central Park Mandarin Duck**, which, in addition to appearances, collects videos and photos published online and in newspapers. On Instagram, the hashtag #mandarinduck has a little fewer than 22,700 mentions, almost all of the latest ones dedicated to the specimen that appeared in New York” (The Post explained).

And that’s not all: our beautiful little duck has been put on T-shirts and is likely to become more popular than the famous bag with a similar name, which is well-known all over the world.

Some people hope it leaves as soon as possible, because it has attracted too many people, not all of whom are nature lovers, but “according to experts, it’s possible that it will spend the winter and Christmas in New York, and may even settle there for good. One ornithologist at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology also explained to *The New York Times* that it might mate with the native ducks, but it’s not clear whether they can produce ducklings together.”

For us, here in Varese Province, this story brought up a question: what has happened to the mandarin duck in Schiranna?

di Translated by Maifredi & Ruperto (Reviewed by Prof. Rolf Cook)

