

PEEP SUMMARY

NAME	SIZE	PRIMARY EXTENSION	SHAPE	LEGS	PLUMAGE	BILL	CEN-TEX OCCURRENCE	HABITAT	HABITS
Least	smallest peep in the world (5.5-6")	none (primaries even with tail)	crouched posture, large round eyes dominate face	yellowish/greenish, spindly	browner, white outer tips of scapulars, scaly look, no extensive clean white throat	fine-tipped, smaller, slight droop at tip	most common in three seasons (not summer)	muddy areas near grass	small flocks, feeds from a crouched posture, foot planted forward, picks rapidly at surface with bill pointed almost vertically, smaller shuffling steps
Western	slightly larger than Least (6.5")	none (primaries even with tail)	front heavy, slightly tipping forward, large & blocky head & neck, legs placed slightly further back, hunched back feeding posture	dark, more knobby than least	paler & more rufous edged upper scapulars than Semipalm., less uniform, more contrast, rufous scapulars and cap during alternate plumage	long, honking bill (often), droop at end	usually find a few in fall and spring, sometimes in winter	mostly broad mudflats	walks steadily, picks nervously at surface, feet further back
Semipalmated	slightly larger than Least (6.25")	very short	rounder head, plumper body, less front-heavy than Western, more "balanced" look	dark, more knobby than least	whiter belly, flanks & throat, grayer back, frosty look	shorter than Western, straight, bulbous tip	less common, but frequent in fall and spring (not in winter or summer)	borad mudflats	frequently aggressive, walks steadily, picking nervously, feet further back
Baird's	(7.5")	yes (Primaries frequently cross beyond tail)	steep forehead, smaller head, longer, attenuated look from side view, prominent eye	black	pale, but complete breast-band, clean white flanks, plain face, dark lores, pale supraloral spot	black staighter, fairly short, fine along entire length	usually find a few in fall and spring	dry edges of mudflats, short grass pastures	walks steady, picking at surface, often looks tentative & uncertain, more often feeds in a horizontal posture, bobs head p & down when walking
White-rumped	(7.5")	yes (Primaries frequently cross beyond tail)	athletic bulky chest, longer legs than Baird's	longer than Baird's	thin fairly prominent supercilium, fine breast streaking usually extends down flanks, white rump in flight	medium length, fine-tipped, may show reddish-brown lower mandible, heavier than Baird's	infrequent in spring, almost never in fall	grassy borders of mudflats, shallow water	walks steadily, picking and probing shallowly, feeds aggressively, tilt forward sharply when feeding causing tail to go up & down
Pectoral	very large (8.75")	none (primaries even with tail)	bulky, broad chest	yellow, long	Streaky breast, sharp demarcation between breast & belly	thick, dark with yellow/orange base	fairly common	wet pastures, grassy edges	walks steadily, probing & picking at surface, less gregarious
		References:							
		ABA Birding Magazine July/August 2008, <i>Identification of North American Peeps</i> , Cameron Cox							
		National Audubon Society: <i>The Sibley Guide to Birds</i> , David Allen Sibley							
		Travis Audubon Society: <i>Birds of The Austin, Texas Region, A Seasonal Distribution Checklist</i>							
		Peterson Field Guides, <i>Advanced Birding</i> , Kenn Kaufman							
		<i>The Shorebird Guide</i> , Michael O'Brien, Richard Crossley, Kevin Karlson							
		Travis Audubon Society's Shorebird Identification Class, Tim Fennell							