

## Little Grebe (or Dabchick)

**Regno:** fauna

Birds

 [tuffetto.jpg](#) [1]

### Little Grebe (or Dabchick) - *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Its small size, rounded body and its habit of continuously diving under the water (which explains its Italian name) make this species easy to recognise, although in the open areas it frequents in winter it could be confused with other small over-wintering grebes.

The sexes do not differ in colour, but the livery differs from season to season and in juveniles.

A species perfectly adapted to aquatic life, the Dabchick rarely leaves the water except to reach a new site in flight (frequently during migration), if it is disturbed it prefers to dive underwater.

Its legs set well back and webbed feet make the Little Grebe a very agile swimmer under water. It colonises even fairly small fresh water habitats, as long as there are plenty of water plants.

A rather shy, territorial bird, it is especially active at night. During the breeding season it is easier to hear its sonorous, trilling mating call than see the bird itself. It builds a floating nest, anchored to the bank vegetation.

In the brief intervals when both adults leave the nest, they will often cover their clutch with vegetation to hide it from the sight of predators.

Like other grebes, Dabchick chicks often ride on their parents' backs. They are gregarious during migration and winter, when they are easier to observe.

The species nests in all the wetlands of northern Tuscany.

**Source URL:** <http://zoneumidetoscane.it/en/little-grebe-or-dabchick>

#### Links:

[1] <http://zoneumidetoscane.it/sites/default/files/tuffetto.jpg>