

155-01-1993

FORC

BARROW'S GOLDENEYE
Bucephala islandica

At 9:00 AM on Feb. 13, 1993 at the mouth of Graveyard Pond, I was studying the waterfowl which consisted of roughly 700 birds, mostly Common Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*). Through my spotting scope I saw a female goldeneye swim into view approximately 100 yards away. I immediately identified the bird as a Barrow's Goldeneye. Compared to the bills of the female Common Goldeneye that were nearby, the Barrow's bill was smaller, more triangular, and nearly all yellow-orange. Only the nail and the very base were dark. All of the female Common Goldeneye had longer and heavier bills that were nearly all dark or only the tip or outer half were orange. The head of the Barrow's was squarish and bulged at the nape. The crown was flat except when the bird was alert at which time the head appeared to be very round. The forehead rose abruptly from the base of the bill peaking at the forecrown rather than at the middle of the crown as in the Common Goldeneye. The color of the head of the Barrow's was darker brown than the Common Goldeneye's. The entire upperside of the Barrow's was dark gray, noticeably darker than the upperside of the Common Goldeneye. There was more contrast between the white neck collar and the brown head of the Barrow's than on the Common Goldeneye. I observed the goldeneye for about an hour. I did not see the Barrow's again until Monday Feb. 15, at which time it had relocated to the tip of Leo's. It could easily be identified at a distance of several hundred yards under a scope magnification of at least 25X even while sleeping because of the distinctive head shape. It stood up and flapped its wings and flew once showing the uppersides of its wings. The median coverts were pale gray, not white, and the secondaries appeared to show less white. The latter characteristic is difficult to determine without direct comparison with Common Goldeneye and even then it may not be possible unless the birds are in the hand. I saw the Barrow's Goldeneye again in the same location on Feb. 20, but it has since been very difficult to locate because there are about 1,000 other ducks sharing the same tiny area of open water. I have had very little experience with Barrow's Goldeneye. I have seen three males in alternate definitive plumage and one probable female.



Jerry McWilliams

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

Species: **Barrow's Goldeneye (Bucephala islandica)**

Date of Sighting: **13 February 1993 to 20 February 1993**

Location: **PRESQUE ISLE STATE PARK**

County: **ERIE**

Observer(s): **Jerry McWilliams**

Date of Submission: **1993**

Submitted by: **Jerry McWilliams**

Written Description: **YES** Photo: **YES** Specimen: **NO**

Recording: **NONE**

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V			Abstain
					A	B	C	
F. Haas	X							
N. Pulcinella	X							
E. Kwater	X							
R. Ickes	X							
G. McWilliams	X							
P. Schwalbe	X							
J. Skinner	X							
TOTALS	7							
DECISION	X							

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

J. C. Haas

Date:

2-23-94