

PENNSYLVANIA ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE  
210 Welcome Ave. Norwood, PA 19074

30 January 2002

Bill Reid  
73 W. Ross St.  
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702

Dear Bill,

It took two rounds, but your report of the Tufted Duck at Ford's Pond on 5 March 2000 did not fare well with the Committee. The final vote was two favoring acceptance (Ickes, Rodewald), four not favoring (Armistead, Couchman, Hess, Sharp), and your abstention.

Those who voted not to accept it expressed concern that a hybrid Scaup x Tufted Duck, uncommonly but regularly found in North America and Eurasia, was not conclusively eliminated. Some members also felt that a tuft if present, though hard to see in Tufted of some ages and in some seasons, should have been apparent at the fairly close range of the observation in good light.

Additional concern was expressed that the bird was possibly an escape from a breeder's collection, a question sometimes raised about any Tufted found in North America. However, the two members favoring acceptance did vote to place it in Class III as an assumed wild bird rather than Class V as an escape.

The result of the vote was to place the record in Class IV-A, probably correct but not without reasonable doubt.

I found an excellent reference about Tufted identification which makes the problem seem even more difficult than I thought it was: M. Tootchin. 1998. Tufted Duck: Possible Anywhere. *Birding* 30:370-383.

Best regards,



For the Committee:  
Paul Hess, Chairman

Record No. 141-01-2000

Lackawanna County - 1st Quarter, 2000  
Observer - William Reid

TUFTED DUCK - on March 5, 2000 I saw a male tufted duck at Ford's Pond, a state fish commission lake in Lackawanna Co.

The bird was observed at about 100 feet in good light with my Nikon 8-20 power zoom binoculars which I generally have set at 8 power, but turn up to about 12 power for birds like this duck. The light was good. The tufted duck was swimming, diving, etc. with a flock of 21 ring-necked ducks. I saw the birds for about 7-8 minutes when they swam around a bend and out of sight.

The first thing that attracted me was the pure white flank without any gray whatsoever which contrasted with the black of the back, chest, head, etc. (The black and white reminded me of a man in a black tuxedo with a white shirt.) There was no white slash by the chest as in a male ring-necked duck. The bird very obligingly flapped its wings at least 5 or 6 times (as did some of the ring-necked ducks), and the broad wing-stripe of the wing was white, not gray as in the ring-necked ducks. The head of the bird was rounded - not peaked as in the ring-necked duck. Unfortunately, I did not get a good angle on the bird to see the tuft on the back of the head. Indeed, Peter Vickery in The Audubon Society Master Guide to Birding, Vol. I, p. 176 says "The thin black crest can be very difficult to see," adding that "the plume is frequently shorter on immature males."

Despite not seeing a plume, the white sides, the lack of a white slash as in the ring-necked duck, the definite white wing-stripe, and the rounded shape of the head all convince me that, without question, the bird was a male tufted duck.

I got back to Ford's Pond twice on the following<sup>day</sup>, as did several local birders whom I immediately contacted, and I got there several times in the next week, but the bird was not seen again.

My only other experience with the tufted duck is the male that was found at Sylvan Lake, Luzerne County in Dec., 1985 and which was seen by numerous observers during the week or so that it was there.

141-01-2000

**Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee**

**Voting Ballot - Round One**

Species: Tufted Duck (Aythya fuligula )

Date of Sighting: 5 March 2000 to 5 March 2000

Location: LACKAWANA

County: FORD'S POND

Observer(s): Bill Reid

Date of Submission: 2000

Submitted by: Bill Reid

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

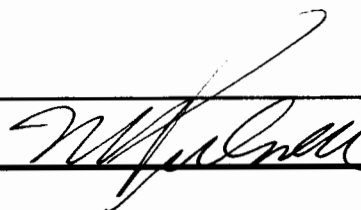
Specimen: No

Recording: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A				Abstain
					Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	
G. Armistead				X				
D. Couchman				X				
P. Hess			X					
R. Ickes			X					
M. Sharp				X				
B. Reid								X
P. Rodewald			X					
TOTALS			3	3				1
DECISION								

Comments: 3/3/1 2ND ROUND

Signature (Secretary):



Date: 3/12/01

**Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee**

**Tabulation Form - Round Two**

Species: Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*)

Date of Sighting: 5 March 2000 to 5 March 2000

Location: FORD'S POND

County: LACKAWANA

Observer(s): Bill Reid

Date of Submission: 2000

Submitted by: Bill Reid

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

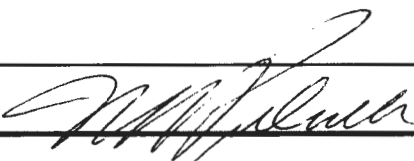
Specimen: No

Recording: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A				Abstain
					Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	
G. Armistead				X				
D. Couchman				X				
P. Hess					X			
R. Ickes			X					
B. Reid								X
P. Rodewald			X					
M. Sharp				X				
TOTALS			2	3	1			1
DECISION				X				

Comments: 2/4/1

Signature (Secretary):



Date: 11/8/01