





145-01-1991

PORC VS. 1

Rare Bird Report

King Eider
Erie County

I saw an immature male King Eider (*Somateria spectabilis*) in Erie County at 10:00 A.M. on Tuesday, 1 January 1991. This bird does not occur in Pennsylvania except on Lake Erie where it is rare but regular (Leberman 1988).

The bird was in the marina on the north side of West Fisher Drive in Presque Isle State Park. I observed the bird for more than 90 minutes. I first saw it on the shore of the marina at a distance of 30 meters. It began to swim away, but it soon returned. The bird submerged frequently and at one point emerged less than 2 meters from a dock that I was standing on. After 15 minutes the bird swam to Pier B where I again observed it at very close range. Then it relocated to the middle of the marina where it associated with a small flock of Common Goldeneyes (*Bucephala clangula*).

In profile, the bill showed the characteristic extension towards the eye and concave pattern at the base. Head on, the bill was clearly cleaved by the most anterior portion of the dorsal ridge of the forehead. The base of the bill was dull orange, and the tip was dusky. The forehead was not exceptionally sloped.

The bird's head was brown. There was a faint but definite buffy eye ring. A faint buffy line extending posteriorly from the eye was also apparent. The bird's breast was quite pale in comparison with its dusky back and wings and sides.

I once saw the bird in flight. The upper wing was dark and unmarked. The wing linings were decidedly paler than the dark primaries and secondaries.

The bird was the same size or slightly larger than the Common Goldeneyes with which it associated. Even at a distance the bird was distinguished by its pale breast, orange bill, and overall shape.

I did not hear the bird.

The only bird with which this bird could have been confused is the Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima*), for which there exists no currently accepted Pennsylvania record (Kwater 1990). Immature males of these species differ importantly in bill shape and color, and observations of this bird's bill absolutely preclude the possibility of Common Eider.

The bird was observed under fair conditions, frequently at extremely close range, with 8.5X binoculars and a 20X telescope. Richard Floyd and Arjun Prabhu also observed the bird.

literature cited:

Kwater, E. 1990. Official list of the birds of Pennsylvania. *Pennsylvania Birds* 4:51-53.

Leberman, R.C. 1988. *A Field List of the Birds of Western Pennsylvania and Adjacent Regions*. Carnegie Museum of Natural History Special Publication Number 13. Pittsburgh, PA USA.

Ted Floyd

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # / of

Species: **King Eider**

Date of Sighting: **January 1-?, 1991**

Observer(s): **Ted Floyd, Franklin C. Haas**

Date of Submission: **1991**

Submitted by: **Ted Floyd, Franklin C. Haas**

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V		
					A	B	C
E. Kwater	X						
B. Haas	X						
F. Haas	X						
R. Leberman	X						
G. McWilliams	X						
S. Santner	X						
P. Schwalbe	X						
TOTALS	7						
DECISION	X						

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

Date: