

155-01-1994

BARROW'S GOLDENEYE
Bucephala islandica

Location: Presque Isle State Park

Date: March 23, 1994

Time: 5:30 to 6:00 PM

Weather: Mostly clear with cirrocumulus clouds covering the sun, wind very light

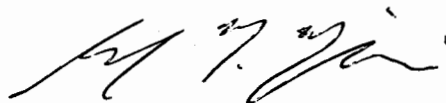
Observer: Jerry McWilliams

Optics: 10 X 40 Zeiss Binocular and Kowa TSN 4 with variable eyepiece set at 35X.

Viewing distance: Several hundred yards. Viewing conditions good.

Details of sighting & description: There was perhaps 10,000 diving ducks sitting on the water in Presque Isle Bay off Big Pond. Most were concentrated in a narrow band near the edge of the ice that extended across the bay. The majority of birds were Canvasback (*Aythya valisineria*), Redhead (*A. americana*), Greater and Lesser Scaup (*A. marila* and *affinis*), Common Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*), and Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*). While searching through several hundred or more Common Goldeneye for a Barrow's Goldeneye, I found an adult male. It was associating with a group of about 12 or so male Common Goldeneye that were actively pursuing 2 or 3 female Common Goldeneye. I saw the Barrow's occasional court a female Common Goldeneye as well. The Barrow's Goldeneye was too far away to see the purple sheen of the head, but all of the other field marks were clearly seen. The Barrow's had a very steep forehead peaking at the fore crown and then sloping down the back of the head forming a distinctive blunt projection on the nape. This projection made the head look longer than the head of the Common Goldeneye. An elongated or crescent shaped white patch was directly behind the eye. Compared to the patch on the male Common, the patch on the Barrow's was noticeably larger. The breast and flanks were white, but there was less white showing on the flanks of the Barrow's than on the flanks of the male Common Goldeneye. The back and folded wings were black with a row of prominent white oval patches on the scapulars. A small portion of the white secondaries could also be seen. The black mantle flowed down the side of the breast separating the white breast and flanks with a horizontal black bar. The black bar ended with a blunt tip just above the water line. The male Common Goldeneye lacks this characteristic. I find that this black bar or finger is one of the first field marks that catches my eye when searching through large flocks of Common Goldeneye for Barrow's Goldeneye.

I was hoping to get a photograph despite the distance from the bird, so I went back to my car to get the camera. When I returned to the scope the bird was no longer in the field of view. It took about 15 minutes to relocate it, but the light was fading by this time and it was too far away to get identifiable photos. This is the third male I have found on Presque Isle in the last 3 years.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "M. J. [unclear]".

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

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

Date of Sighting: 23 March 1994 to 23 March 1994

Location: PRESQUE ISLE STATE PARK

County: ERIE

Observer(s): Jerry McWilliams

Date of Submission: 1994

Submitted by: Jerry McWilliams

Written Description: YES Photo: NO 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):

F. Haas

Date:

9-25-94