





Barrow's Goldeneye on the Delaware River

1996

Bob Scheibner

155-

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On Wednesday, January 8, 1997, a friend from Bethlehem, Pa phoned and informed me that he was with a hunting party that shot a male Barrow's Goldeneye on Dec 27<sup>th</sup> 1996. The bird was taken from a small group of goldeneyes feeding in a small cove on the Burlington County, N.J. side of the Delaware river. The exact location of the cove is at the lower end of the Taylor Tract. Two channel range markers are positioned there. Upstream from this point are the entrance to Dredge Harbor and the mouth of the Rancocas Creek. Immediately across the river is the Torresdale section of Philadelphia. The hunters were shooting from a boat on the river. The bird is now stored in a freezer and it will be mounted. I went to Bethlehem to see it close at hand. The specimen is a beautiful male in full plumage. Some of us are sure this is the bird that was seen on the Delaware River during the winter seasons since 1994 and was first reported in Bucks county last year by Bill Hohne. At that time it was observed between Scudders Falls and the area north of New Hope.

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My friend told me they were only thinking "goldeneye" as they sculled to get closer to the swimming ducks. When the birds took off the hunter fired and it wasn't until they picked up the dead one it was realized they had killed a Barrow's. I was told that the hunters think other Barrow's are on the river but my birding friends and I doubt it. Still, I'll make more of an effort to check out goldeneyes on the Delaware during the rest of the winter.

I am sad that this was a bird so many of us looked for and enjoyed. I remember talking with others about the possibility of its return each year. A mounted specimen somewhere just doesn't make it.

It would be a good thing for the game commission to inform hunters to watch out for, and not to shoot, rare birds.

155-01-1996

## BARROWS GOLDENEYE

Date: February 11, 1996

Temperature: Approximately 38°

Winds: 10 - 15 NW

Skies: Sunny

Bird: Barrows Goldeneye - *Bucephala Islandica*

Location: New Hope, Pennsylvania on the Delaware River

Time: 3:20 pm through 5:35 pm (flock flew south)

I first observed this adult male Barrows Goldeneye through 10 x 40 Ziess at a distance of 75 feet. This bird was feeding (diving) with a flock of 35 common goldeneye.

Description: I first noticed the white crescent shape on the face just as the bird dove. Upon relocating, I was now observing it through a 22 x 60 Bushnell scope.

Field Marks: White crescent on face, more black showing on back and extending forward almost to water separating its white breast from white sides. Also showing, a row of white dots across black back.

Observers: Allen Brady, Steve Farbotnik, Dave DeReanus, Walt Peoples.

The same bird was present at this location again the following Sunday, February 18, between 1:30 and 6:10. Most sightings following February 11 were at or near Scudders Falls Bridge, Yardley, Pennsylvania.

Photographed by Allen Brady on February 19, 1996.

*Last reported at Scudders Falls 2/21/86 (T. Watanabe) KK  
This is a first Berks County Record.*

*William Hoelke*

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

Species: **Barrow's Goldeneye (Bucephala islandica)**  
 Date of Sighting: **11 February 1996 to 21 February 1996**  
 Location: **NEW HOPE**  
 County: **BUCKS**  
 Observer(s): **Bill Hoehne**  
                   **Nick Pulcinella; Rick Wiltraut**  
 Date of Submission: **1996**  
 Submitted by: **Bill Hoehne**  
 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       |          |           |          |         |   |   |         |
| S. Feldstein  | X       |          |           |          |         |   |   |         |
| TOTALS        | 7       |          |           |          |         |   |   |         |
| DECISION      | X       |          |           |          |         |   |   |         |

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

*F. C. Haas*

Date:

2-22-97