

116A-01-1995



**CANADA (RICHARDSON'S) GOOSE**  
*Branta canadensis hutchinsii*

**Location:** Presque Isle State Park

**Date:** December 17, 1995

**Time:** 9:00 to 10:00 AM

**Weather:** Mostly cloudy, wind light from the northeast, visibility good.

**Observer:** Jerry McWilliams

**Optics:** Zeiss 10 X 40 Binocular and Kowa TSN 4 Spotting Scope from 25X to 50X

**Details of sighting and description:** I estimated about 400 Canada Geese feeding off Beach 11. Most of these birds were new arrivals since there had only been about 100 Canada Geese in the area in the past three or four weeks, so I decided to look through the flock for any unusual species that may be with them. Other than a Graylag Goose, I found one of the smaller races of Canada Geese that I determined was of the race *hutchinsii*. The goose stood out from the rest of the flock by the much smaller size. It was nearly half the size of some of the larger Canada Geese in the flock. It was obviously a Canada Goose showing the all black head and neck with the distinctive white chin strap, dark brown back with whitish breast and light brown flanks, all black tail and white stern. The most convincing characters that identified this goose as a *hutchinsii* other than the very small size was the stubby bill. The base of the bill was rather thick, almost as thick as it was long giving the shape of the bill a triangular look. The forehead appeared rather steep and the crown appeared relatively flat and then abruptly rounded off on the back of the head. The profile of the head seemed shorter and rounder than the other Canada Geese. The neck was very short and was black and was somewhat diffused where it met the whitish-buff breast rather than the black being sharply defined at the breast as in the other Canada Geese. With the neck fully extended it was about half the length of the other longest necked Canadas. At times the *hutchinsii* swam past a Canvasback for comparison and the *hutchinsii* was noticeably heavier than the Canvasback, but only a little longer. I took about 25 photographs of the goose.

This may represent the first documented record for Erie County. I have never identified this race before. I also considered the race *minus*, but *minus* is much darker and winters primarily along the west coast.

**Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee**

**Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of**

Species: **Canada (Richardson's) Goose (Branta canadensis hutchinsii)**

Date of Sighting: **17 December 1995 to 17 December 1995**

Location: **PRESQUE ISLE STATE PARK**

County: **ERIE**

Observer(s): **Jerry McWilliams**

Date of Submission: **1996**

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				<del>XXXX</del>				X
N. Pulcinella	X							
E. Kwater	X							
R. Ickes			X					
G. McWilliams	X							
P. Schwalbe	X							
S. Feldstein				X				
TOTALS	4		1	1				1
DECISION	X		1					

Comments: *Since there is one abstention, I assume a 5/1 split qualifies as acceptance.*

Signature (Secretary):

*J. Haas*

Date:

*2-22-97*