

Submission Date	2015-01-23 23:01:27
Observer's Name	Matthew Sabatine
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Phone	570-656-9531
Observer's Address	Street Address: 115 B Fox Gap Ave. City: Bangor State / Province: PA Postal / Zip Code: 18013 Country: United States
Species (Common Name)	Barrow's Goldeneye
Species (Scientific Name)	Bucephala islandica
Number of individuals	1
Age(s) and Plumage(s) and Sex (if known)	adult female
Observation Date and Time	01-20-2015 12:20 PM
Did you submit this sighting to eBird?	Yes
Link to eBird checklist	http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S21433447
County	Northampton
Location (City, Borough, Township)	Easton
Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road)	Delaware River, viewable from Rt. 611 right across from the Autogrille Deli
GPS coordinates of sighting	40.717748,-75.191721
Habitat	Delaware River
Distance to bird	75 meters
Viewing conditions	clear day, slightly overcast skies; relatively warm with little to no wind
Optical equipment used	Nikon Prostaff spotting scope
Description	I was looking through a large group of Goldeneye at this location and, when spotting the Barrow's, was immediately struck by the stark differences between Barrow's and surrounding (female) Common Goldeneyes. The much shorter, slimmer and stubbier bill contrasted with the nearby Commons, whi

ch showed a much thicker, longer bill. The bill was also nearly all yellow. This is a subjective feature in Goldeneye identification, as even pure Commons can have fully yellow bills, however the yellow bill also fits the ID of Barrow's. The head color, which was a really deep, dark chocolate brown was noticeably darker in shade than the nearby female Common Goldeneye. Perhaps the best identification feature visible in the field was head shape. The Barrow's had a much "blockier" head shape as compared with the nearby Commons, which showed a much rounder, "cleaner" head shape. The Barrow's showed an extremely steep forehead, and also the back of the head was "blocky" in that it came to almost a 90 degree angle at the back of the head where it meets the neck, whereas the Common Goldeneye females showed the head shape, particularly the back of the head, that was much smoother and rounder and even as the head blended into the back of their neck. The female Barrow's was in the immediate vicinity of several female Common Goldeneye, which allowed for a perfect opportunity to directly compare the species.

Behavior (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing)

all of the Goldeneye were diving frequently, including the Barrow's, presumably to hunt for food. When not underwater, they were swimming casually and I did not see any of them in flight during my observation. When I initially saw the Goldeneye group, they were quite close to the PA side of the river, very obviously within PA state lines, but when seeing my drifted out toward the middle of the river and eventually out to closer to the Jersey side, but they never flushed. I hid behind a tree so I could watch and take photos, or they likely would have split, as they often do.

Separation from similar species (How you eliminated others)

see above description on separating from Common Goldeneye. In short, the full yellow bill, smaller, slimmer and much sturdier bill, blockier head shape, darker head color than female Common Goldeneye.

Discussion – anything else relevant to the observation that will aid the committee in evaluating it:

the bird's presence could possibly be correlative to the early and substantial freezing of bodies of water in the region. I suspect this because there have been more Common Goldeneye along the river as of late, many of which would not be present during mild or "normal" winters, not feeling it's necessary to move this far south when bodies of water up north remain typically unfrozen. These types of years (prolonged cold) seem to be the most productive for finding large numbers of Goldeneye, and also for finding Barrow's.

Are you positive of your identification ? (Why or why not)

yes. I have seen Barrow's Goldeneye on several occasions and I knew it was a Barrow's Goldeneye immediately when I saw it, because of the field marks noted above.

During

none

After

none

Supporting evidence (check all that apply)

Photograph

Upload images, audio, video or drawings



[IMG_1576.JPG](#)



[IMG_1595.JPG](#)



[IMG_1599.JPG](#)



[IMG_1600.JPG](#)



[IMG_1603.JPG](#)

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