

Barrow's Goldeneye

17 Mar 1984

Forney Lake, Fremont Co., IA

\*Nolan, \*Thompson, \*E/E Armstrong, \*Silcock

many others; P-0163, IBL 54:43; 55:56, Silcock 1984

Record Number: 84-07

Classification: A-P

DOCUMENTATIONS

Michael Nolan (17 March)  
Eugene Armstrong (24 March)  
Eloise Armstrong (24 March)  
Dennis Thompson (24 March)  
Ross Silcock (24, 25 March)  
Carl J. Bendorf (25 March)  
Thomas J. Staudt (25 March)  
Thomas H. Kent (25 March)  
Peter C. Petersen (25 March)  
Barb Wilson (25 March)  
Robert K. Myers (31 March)  
Francis L. Moore (31 March)  
Beth Proescholdt (6 April)

PHOTOGRAPHS

Thomas H. Kent (25 March; P-0163); IBL 54:75)

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 54:43  
Silcock, W. R. 1984. Barrow's Goldeneye in Fremont Co., Iowa,  
and an analysis of interior vagrancy patterns. IBL 54:75-77.  
Photograph: IBL 54:75 (P-0163), AB 38:917 (P-0163)  
Records Committee: IBL 54:56

VOTE: 7-I-P

I-P, a first.  
I-P, photo diagnostic.

84-07

Silcock, W. R. 1984. Barrow's Goldeneye in Fremont Co., Iowa, and an analysis of interior vagrancy patterns. Iowa Bird Life 54:75-77.

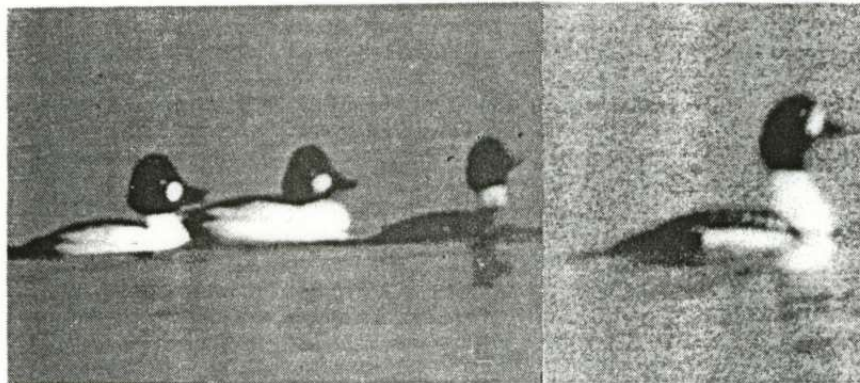
## Barrow's Goldeneye 75 in Fremont Co., Iowa, and an Analysis of Interior Vagrancy Patterns

W. ROSS SILCOCK  
Box 300  
TABOR, IOWA 51653

On March 24, 1983, I was contacted by Denis Thompson, Eugene Armstrong, and Eloise Armstrong, who had just identified a Barrow's Goldeneye (*Bucephala islandica*) at Forney's Lake in Fremont County. We immediately returned to the lake and found the bird, apparently Iowa's first confirmed record (Dinsmore et al, 1984). After notifying other birders that evening, many came to see the bird on March 25, a Sunday. Among them was Tom Kent, who photographed the Barrow's Goldeneye at some distance, resulting in the identifiable photographs used with this article. Upon spreading the word of the bird's presence, it was discovered that it had in fact been found first on March 17 by Michael Nolan of Ames, Iowa.

Many observers have forwarded documentation forms to the Iowa Ornithologists' Union Records Committee, and the description given here is to some extent a distillation of the critical identification points noted.

The immediate impression of the swimming bird was its darkness by comparison with the many nearby Common Goldeneyes. This darker appearance was due to much reduced white on the wings, to the point that all that remained was a row of white spots entirely surrounded by black. There was also a larger area of black in the shoulder area, with the black feathering reaching almost to the water. Comparison with Common Goldeneyes also revealed a significant difference in head shape, to me probably the most interesting point, as it allows separation of females also, the plumages of female Common and Barrow's Goldeneyes being very similar on swimming birds. The Barrow's Goldeneyes had an almost vertical forehead rising from the base of the bill, while nearby Common Goldeneyes showed a rearward slope of the forehead, almost at 45 degrees (see photos). Further more, the bill of the Barrow's was noticeably small, adding to the "puffy-headed" appearance of the bird. The Barrow's also had an obviously crescent-shaped white area between the eye and the bill, with the upper point of the crescent reaching above an imaginary line between the eye and bill, while the round spot of the Common was completely below such a line. This was noticed by Carl Bendorf



Common Goldeneyes, 25 March 1984 Forney L. Photo by T.H. Kent  
Barrow's Goldeneye, 25 March 1984 Forney L. Photo by T.H. Kent



Silcock, W. R. 1984. Barrow's Goldeneye in Fremont Co., Iowa, and an analysis of interior vagrancy patterns. Iowa Bird Life 54:75-77. (cont)

of Iowa City. These factors lent a diagnostic appearance to the head of the Barrow's Goldeneye, and could be used to determine whether a female was present. In my opinion there was no female with the bird March 24 or 25, but indications were made to me that a female was seen at later dates, although I have seen no documentation of such a bird or birds.

There are two breeding populations of Barrow's Goldeneye in North America, and a case can be made, based on records from the states surrounding Iowa, for appearance in Iowa of birds from either population. Of course, confirmation of such conjecture is only possible through banding data, as noted by Palmer (1976). One group breeds near the Atlantic coast of Canada, normally wintering along the Atlantic coast south as far as New Jersey, with a small number wintering in southwestern Lake Michigan and on "open stretches of rivers in that general region" (Palmer, 1976). The other group breeds in the mountains of southern Alaska, western Canada, and the northwestern United States, as far southeastward as Wyoming. These western birds winter primarily on the Pacific coast as far south as California, although there are a few birds which winter on open water in the interior, such as at Yellowstone National Park (Palmer, 1976).

Thus there are wintering birds from both breeding populations in areas from which vagrants may easily reach Iowa. Wintering birds are often found on Estes Lake on the eastern edge of the Colorado Rockies (Lane and Holt, 1973), and on the Missouri River at Garrison Dam in North Dakota (Lambeth and Faanes, 1981). Such birds would be expected to move southwestward in the late fall if cold weather caused freezeup of their wintering areas (due to the northwesterly direction of the prevailing winds at that time), and would likely enter drainages of such southeastwardly flowing river systems as the Platte in Nebraska and the Missouri in South Dakota, Nebraska, Iowa, and Missouri. The evidence for such a movement is strong, in that there have been some 16 records from Nebraska and South Dakota, most near major river systems, and at such times as to indicate movement in fall and spring as well as overwintering (Whitney et al, 1978; Johnsgard, 1980; Cortelyou, 1983). Interestingly, 4 of 6 South Dakota records and 7 of 11 Nebraska records are in spring. This point will be discussed further.

Wintering birds presumed to be from the eastern breeding population (Palmer, 1976) can be found on Lake Michigan, and Bohlen (1978) considers Barrow's Goldeneye to be a rare migrant and winter resident in Illinois, implying regular status in the state. In Minnesota and Wisconsin Barrow's Goldeneye appears to be somewhat less regular, being listed as casual in Minnesota on Lake Superior and the Mississippi River (Green and Janssen, 1975), while Barger et al (1975) indicate irregular occurrence on Lake Michigan from fall into spring. Recent records in Illinois cited by Bohlen include several from parts of the state away from Lake Michigan, suggesting southward movement during late fall and winter of a few individual birds. That some birds winter on the Mississippi River is indicated by Clawson (1982), who shows Barrow's Goldeneye to be a winter vagrant on the Mississippi in northeast Missouri.

These data indicate that Barrow's Goldeneye may reach Iowa from the east via Lake Michigan and the Mississippi River or from the west via the Missouri or Platte Rivers.

It is interesting to speculate on the reasons why most of the western records (South Dakota and Nebraska) are in spring. A simple explanation may be that in fall some male first year birds (the age class most prone to wander) still retain the female-like Basic I plumage and are overlooked, although Palmer (1976) states that most young males have acquired the adult drake-like Alternate I plumage by mid-winter. By spring however, all males should have acquired adult drake-like plumage and would be less likely to be overlooked. A more intriguing possibility is

Silcock, W. R. 1984. Barrow's Goldeneye in Fremont Co., Iowa, and an analysis of interior vagrancy patterns. Iowa Bird Life 54:75-77. (cont)

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that some of the Barrow's Goldeneyes derived from the eastern population and wintering on Lake Michigan may move in a northwestward direction in spring after being forced south by bad winter conditions, especially those birds wintering on the Mississippi River. These birds might follow the Missouri-Platte systems in spring, assisted by the prevailing southeastward winds at that time of year, thus augmenting the numbers of birds found in spring on these river systems.

(Thanks are due to Thomas H. Kent for critically reviewing this article.)

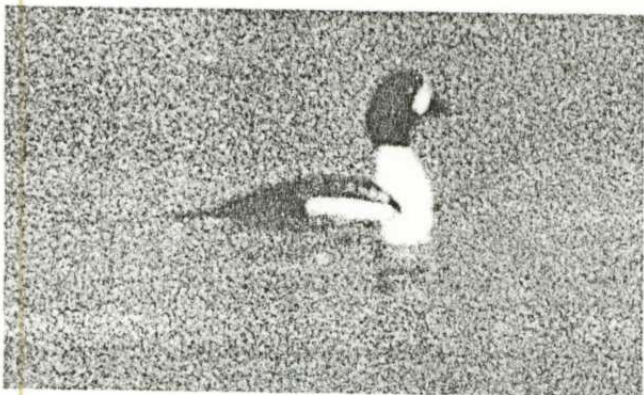
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Waveland Mar. 19-20 (AB), while singles at Ballard W.M.A., Ky., Apr. 7 (LRa, DN) and Big Island W.M.A., O., Apr. 14 (J) were locally unusual. Small numbers of Ross' Geese were reported from 2 s.w. Iowa locations where they are regular migrants. A total of 7 Cinnamon Teal sightings from Iowa Mar. 17-May 19 was greater than normal, while one wandered E to Carlyle L., Ill., Apr. 18 (†SR). Quite unexpected was an apparent N. Shoveler x Am. Wigeon hybrid at Brookville Res., Ind., Apr. 11 (JC). It was a good spring for Eur. Wigeon with at least two in the w. Lake Erie marshes, different males near Lawrenceburg, Ind.-O., Mar. 18-21 (†JBe, †RH, m.ob.) & 30-31 (†MM *et al.*), and one at Sweet Marsh, Ia., Apr. 15-17 providing only the 3rd record for that state (†FM, †RM, m.ob.).

Inland Greater Scaup sightings increased dramatically. Flocks of 50 at Mark Twain N.W.R., Ill., Mar. 2 (SR) and Brookville Res., Ind., Mar. 15 (TLc, JB) were unusual while smaller numbers elsewhere included several birds lingering through May 10. Harlequin Ducks are scarce spring migrants along the Great Lakes; hence, one at Oregon, O., Mar. 12 (JP) and one-to-two at Chicago Mar. 22-Apr. 10 (HR, JL *et al.*) were noteworthy. Oldsquaws were scarce along the Great Lakes where the largest flock was of 15. However, they staged a strong movement across Ohio, Kentucky, Illinois and Iowa where there was a total of 16 inland sightings including an unprecedented 17 at Barkley L. and 25 at Kentucky L., Ky., Mar. 31 (BP). A few Black and Surf scoters appeared along the Great Lakes while inland records consisted of two Blacks at North Branch Res., O., Apr. 25 (J) and four Surfs at Beaver-creek Res., O., Apr. 3 (TBa) plus singles at Coralville Res., Ia., Apr. 9 (T) and Mendota, Ill., Apr. 24-26 (JHm). White-winged Scoters peaked with 475 at Wilmette, Ill., Mar. 3 (JL) while a late bird lingered at Cleveland through May 31; the only inland sighting was at Columbus, O., Apr. 10 (JF). Common Goldeneyes were numerous along L. Erie where 6000 were present in Lorain, O., Mar. 10 (VF). Last but not least, Iowa's first Barrow's Goldeneye record was provided by a male photographed at Forney L., Mar. 17-Apr. 6 (†MN, †m.ob.—ph.).



Male Barrow's Goldeneye, Forney L., Ia., Mar. 25, 1984. First Iowa record. Photo/T.H. Kent.

**HAWKS** — The hawk migration got off to a slow start during March's unfavorable weather. However, a substantial movement accompanied the late April warming trend and culminated in large flights along the Great Lakes Apr. 25-28.

As many as seven Black Vultures at Brookville Res., Ind., through May 15 (m.ob.) and one at Horseshoe L., Ill., Apr. 26 (†JV) were n. of their normal range. Turkey Vultures peaked at 125-170 at several locations in Ohio and Indiana. Ospreys arrived on time, and their numbers continued to improve in most areas. Mississippi Kites were fairly numerous along the Mississippi R. in w. Kentucky where daily counts of 13-17 were reported during the last one-half of May. Extralimital kites wandered N to Channahon, Ill., May 5 (JO) and Morgan, Ill., May 13-20 (PW). Wintering Bald Eagles departed during March; migrants were more widely reported from the e. states this spring. Accipiters were generally observed in normal numbers with the largest flight composed of 140 Sharp-shinned and 22 Cooper's hawks at Dunes S.P., Ind., Apr. 26 (KB). This spring's N. Goshawk movement was comparable to last year's and consisted of one-to-three birds at each of 11 Iowa, 10 Illinois, 6 Indiana and 2 Ohio sites through May 1.

No large Red-shouldered Hawk flights developed this spring. Large numbers of Broad-winged Hawks migrated along the Great Lakes during the last week of April as exemplified by a peak of 2000+ in Ottawa, O., Apr. 25 (*vide* JG). This flight was not apparent inland. Swainson's Hawks invaded the w. states with 14 sightings in Iowa and 10 in Missouri including flocks of 21 at Cherokee, Ia., Apr. 30 (MBr) and 19 at Taberville Prairie, Mo., Apr. 14 (LM). In addition to Illinois' nesting birds, two were noted at Horseshoe L., Apr. 20 (†LB). A Ferruginous Hawk was discovered at Springfield, Mo., Feb. 22 where it is a casual migrant (†CT). The total of 7 Golden Eagle reports from Indiana, Ohio and Illinois was slightly greater than normal for recent springs. Both Merlins and Peregrine Falcons continued their gradual improvement with at least 12 and 26 sightings, respectively. Prairie Falcons have become rare but regular migrants through the w. states. In addition to wintering birds, single Prairies were observed near Lester, Ia., Mar. 9 (†DH), Forney L., Ia., Mar. 25 (†P) and in Alexander, Ill., Mar. 31 (†JRo).

**GROUSE THROUGH CRANES** — A Greater Prairie-Chicken in Sullivan, Mo., May 3 had wandered 100 mi from its normal range (RT). Rails were generally reported in fair numbers. Yellow Rails were more widely observed than normal with single birds in 4 Iowa marshes plus single locations in Missouri, Ohio and Illinois Apr. 13-May 22. The only Black Rail was captured at Fairmount, Ill., May 30 (JS). King Rails have not shown any improvement with a total of 9 sightings this spring. As many as 10-12 were noted at Little Portage River W.M.A., O. (JP *et al.*), while four adults and a nest at Reelfoot N.W.R., Ky., May 27 were unusual for that state (BP *et al.*). Peak concentrations of Virginia Rails and Soras were 17 and 37, respectively. Extralimital Purple Gallinules appeared at Mammoth Cave N.P., Ky., Apr. 28-29 (J & PB, KO—ph.), Mingo N.W.R., Mo., Apr. 28-May 14 (†RL, m.ob.) and near Alton, Ill., May 5-27 (RE, †PS, m.ob.). Common Moorhens were thought to have increased in several states. Normal numbers of Sandhill Cranes were observed along their regular migration corridor between w. Ohio and e. Illinois. Extralimital records included one-to-three at 3 Iowa locations and two in Holmes, O., May 2 (DK).

**SHOREBIRDS** — The shorebird migration was considered to be relatively good in many areas. As usual, large concentrations were very locally distributed and generally of short duration. Migrant Lesser Golden-Plovers returned Mar. 17 and peaked with 1000-4000 in Illinois and 150-900 in the other states. Two early Semipalmated Plovers returned to Louisville Apr. 6 (DN). It was a dismal spring for Piping Plovers with only 3 sightings from Iowa where a large group of 10 was found at the IPL ponds, Pottawattamie May 28 (BW). The 13 Am. Avocet reports constituted a normal spring flight. They were scattered across all states except Kentucky with locally unusual concentrations of 24 at Huron, O., Apr. 27 (DC, TL) and 22 near Rockford, Ill., Apr. 28 (LJ). Numbers of Willets continued to improve. They appeared at a total of 38 locations in all states but were most numerous in the w. states with a maximum of 64 at the IPL ponds, Ia., Apr. 26 (BW). In the e. states, largest reported flocks consisted of six to 15 Willets. A remarkably early Spotted Sandpiper returned to S.C.R., Mar. 7 (L). Upland Sandpipers were generally discovered in normal numbers at traditional nesting areas. The flock of 101 Whimbrels in Wayne, O., May 26 was unprecedented for this Region (JHe, DK). Between three and seven were found at 3 n. Ohio sites while singles at Hendrickson Marsh, Ia., May 12-13 (†SD *et al.*), Jefferson City, Mo., May 19 (JR), Ray, Mo., May 19 (CH, MMc) and LaMoille, Ill., June 3-5 (†JHm, m.ob.) were unexpected. Hudsonian Godwits were restricted to Iowa, Illinois and Missouri with a maximum of 67 at Colo, Ia., May 11 (HZ). Marbled Godwits were fairly scarce with one to six reported from 5 Iowa and 2 Ohio locations.

Red Knots were restricted to Ohio with scattered sightings along L. Erie plus 2 inland reports including a remarkable 47 in Seneca, O., May 18 (TBa). An early Sanderling returned to Columbus, O., Apr. 23 (JF). They were scarce along the Great Lakes but appeared at scattered inland sites where one at Kentucky L., May 9 (CP) and three in Fulton May 27 (BP *et al.*) provided rare spring records from Kentucky. A Semipalmated Sandpiper at Colo., Ia., Apr. 14 was early (T). Single W. Sandpipers were scattered across Illinois and Missouri while 12 in Allen, Ind., May 18 provided a remarkable spring concentration anywhere in the Region (Haw). White-rumped Sandpipers were observed in normal numbers



Summary of Review of an Ornithologic Observation  
by the Records Committee  
of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union

SPECIES: BARROW'S GOLDENEYE  
DATE SEEN: March 17, 1984  
SITE OF OBSERVATION: Forney Lake, Fremont County  
OBSERVERS: Michael Nolan, Dennis Thompson, Gene and Eloise Armstrong, Tom Staudt,  
et al.  
DATE OF REVIEW: 1984  
METHOD OF REVIEW: Circulation by mail to Records Committee  
CLASSIFICATION OF RECORD: I-P  
COMMENTS:

Well-described by many observers and diagnostically-photographed by Tom Kent, this first confirmed state record was very welcome.

The opinions expressed here are based on the information available to the Committee and should not necessarily preclude an alternate interpretation by those who observed the bird firsthand.

Any action may be re-reviewed upon submission of additional evidence.

- Explanation of Classification:
- I = labeled, diagnostic specimen, photograph, or recording available for review by the Committee
  - II = acceptable sight record documented independently by 3 or more observers
  - III = acceptable sight record documented by 1 or 2 observers
  - IV = probably correct record, but not beyond doubt
  - V = record with insufficient evidence to judge
  - VI = probably incorrect identification, escapee, or otherwise unacceptable record

Classification is based on the highest category agreed upon by six of seven committee members.

What species? BARROWS GOLDENEYE How many? 1Location? FOURNEY'S LAKE, FREMONT CO.Type of habitat? LAKEWhen? date(s): MARCH 17, 1984 time: 4:30<sup>pm</sup> to 4:45<sup>pm</sup>Who? your name and address: MICHAEL NOLAN, 702 CARROLL, AMES IA 50010Others with you: LINDA ZALEWSKIOthers ~~before~~ or after you: ROSS SILCOCK, Steve Dinmore

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

Three field marks differentiated this diving duck from a common Goldeneye.

- 1) Elongated, crescent shaped marking on the head in contrast to the roughly circular mark of the common goldeneye.
- 2) Isolated white dots surrounded by black on the upper wing and back. The common goldeneye has more of a striped pattern.
- 3) a "finger" of black reaching down into the white on the lower part of the head.

Similar species and how eliminated:

Common Goldeneye - see above

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? No

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:

Very lighting good although overcast. Distance about 200 feet.  
Binoculars 7x35 and spotting scope 22x both used.

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

B. Cook S. Dinmore

References and persons consulted before writing description: Peterson field guideHow long before field notes made? same day this form completed? 3/26/84



BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD.

1. Species Barrow's Goldeneye - Male 2. Number: one

3. Location Forney Lake Fremont County

4. Date: March 24, 1984 5. Time Bird seen: 3:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M.

6. Description of size, shape and color-pattern (describe in great detail all parts of the plumage, and beak and feet coloration, in addition, to the diagnostic characteristics, but include only what actually was seen in the field):

A striking black and white wing pattern. Puffy head  
Black hook down the chest just ahead of the wing. Crescent  
on the side of the face. looked just black+white. No color seen  
on head

7. Description of voice, if heard:

8. Description of behavior: Preening & floating

9. Habitat - general: Forney Lake  
specific:

10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8, Explain:  
Common Goldeneye - Head shape - face pattern - Wing + hook on side

11. Distance (how measured)? Between 200 & 300 yds  
EST.

12. Optical equipment: Bushnell  
7X35  
20 pw Scope

13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):  
Bright overcast behind our back Very good lighting

14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:  
None - Common goldeneye's

15. Other observers:  
Dennis Thompson (found bird) Eugene Armstrong - ~~Ross Silcock~~

16. Did the others agree with your identification?  
yes

17. Other observers who independently identified this bird: ROSS Silcock

18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:  
Robbins + National Geog books  
Didn't need influenced. No doubt as to bird's ID.

19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? Next morning

Blaise Armstrong Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Date: 3/25/84 City, State: Booneville, Iowa 50038



BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD.

1. Species Barron's Goldeneye 2. Number: 1

3. Location Jorney's Lake SW Iowa

4. Date: March 24 5. Time Bird seen: 3:30 PM to 5:00 PM

6. Description of size, shape and color-pattern (describe in great detail all parts of the plumage, and beak and feet coloration, in addition, to the diagnostic characteristics, but include only what actually was seen in the field):

triangle shaped crescent with top end of crescent much above line from bill to eye. black over back with white dots on folded wing. forehead straight up from beak. beak shorter than common golden eye

7. Description of voice, if heard: none

8. Description of behavior: swarming, preening, sleeping

9. Habitat - general:  
specific:

10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8, Explain:

Common goldeneye seen side by side, odd shape of head compared to triangle shape of common, much darker on back, with less white, crescent triangle instead of round

11. Distance (how measured)? 300 yds - estimate 12. Optical equipment: 7-35 20 power scope

13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):

14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species: Bright sky back light

15. Other observers: Denise Thompson

16. Did the others agree with your identification? yes

17. Other observers who independently identified this bird: Ross Silcock

18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:

19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description?

Eugene Armstrong Address: Booneville  
Signature

Date: 3-25-84 City, State: Iowa

This record belongs to Denise Thompson who first called our attention to different over all appearance & might be a Barron's Goldeneye



BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD.

1. Species Barrow's Goldeneye 2. Number: 1
3. Location Forney's Lake, Fremont Co
4. Date: 3/24/84 5. Time Bird seen: 3:30 to 5:30
6. Description of size, shape and color-pattern (describe in great detail all parts of the plumage, and beak and feet coloration, in addition, to the diagnostic characteristics, but include only what actually was seen in the field):  

Medium-sized black & white duck. Row of white spots on dark scapulars ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> obvious. Dark ~~line~~ color of back extended into a black line going down the shoulder. Sides and breast were white. Head was dark with a white "splotch" (as opposed to spot) that extended from underneath ~~eye to~~ front side of eye to above the eye. Bill was short & stubby. ~~Head~~ Forehead rose straight up from the bill.
7. Description of voice, if heard: Entire back 1/5 of the duck ~~sp~~ was dark. Had a "pintarled"
8. Description of behavior: look because of lifted tail.
9. Habitat - general: Shallow lake. Found in open water.  
 specific:
10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8, Explain:  
Common Goldeneye was observed with this duck. Both were in scope at same time on a couple occasions. Common much whiter on sides and wing. No distinct white spots on scapulars. Head triangular - white spot did not extend above eye. Bill larger.
11. Distance (how measured)? Approx 250-300 yds. 12. Optical equipment: Scope, <sup>(20X)</sup> Bino's
13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):  
Sun was in west, observer directly south of the bird. Good light.
14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:  
None. Well acquainted with Common Goldeneye.
15. Other observers:  
Eugene & Eloise Armstrong. Ross Silcock.
16. Did the others agree with your identification?  
Yes
17. Other observers who independently identified this bird:  
Dadles.
18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:  
Used Robbins, Nat. Geo's bird books. Picture on front of Audubon's Master-Guide matches bird perfectly.
19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? 4 days. (slightly tardy)  
Demmus Thompson Address: 1800 56<sup>th</sup> ~~st~~  
 Signature  
 Date: 3/27/84 City, State: Des Moines, Ia. 50310





The Armstrong's + I had been to Riverton looking for a <sup>84-07</sup>  
~~Cinnamon Teal~~ Cinnamon Teal. No luck. We went to Farney's to look  
for a Ross' Goose. We watched the tens of thousands of Snows  
at the east end of Farney's with no result, so we moved to the  
middle parking area. I was ~~was~~ outside of the car with a  
scope on the roof when a pair of scaups with long wing ~~strip~~ stripes  
flew through my field of view. ~~Out of the car~~ In passing I noticed  
a funny-looking goldeneye but didn't think much about it. Eloise + Gene  
were looking from the car and one of them asked me if I had anything.  
Joking, I said, "A Pair of Greater Scaup + a ~~Barrow's~~ Barrow's Goldeneye."  
They laughed and Gene told Eloise I'd had too many Fig Newtons.  
But I happened to focus back on the goldeneye and immediately  
noticed the distinct spots on the ~~scapulars~~ scapulars. I looked at the Robbins  
look and ~~was~~ was almost sure it was a Barrow's. The only thing I wasn't  
sure about was the white facial ~~spot~~ spot. I couldn't really make  
a crescent out of it. I immediately had Gene + Eloise look at it,  
+ Gene was positive it had a crescent. After we made a positive ID, we  
rushed and got Ross Silcock at his house, + he agreed it was a Barrow's.  
Boy, was he excited. He showed us some Greater Scaup, but most of the geese  
had gone to feed by then, so we couldn't find any Ross' geese.

(Wouldn't that have been a grand-slam if we had found the Cinnamon Teal,  
+ Ross' goose, G. Scaup, + Barrow's Goldeneye on the same trip?)

## DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

Species: BARROW'S GOLDENEYE

Location: Forney Lake, Fremont County, Iowa

Type of Habitat: Marsh and lake

When? date(s): March 24 and 25, 1984

Name of Observer: Ross Silcock, Box 300, Tabor, Iowa 51653

Others: Gene and Eloise Armstrong; Dennis Thompson (March 24);  
m.ob. (March 25).

Description: Taken from field notes made at the time (4.15 pm on  
March 24), copied verbatim:

Male, alone, no female attached.

Very dark back (white scapulars), dark rump, dark mark on  
breast (where Ring-necked Duck white).

Head (compared to nearby Common Goldeneyes) very puffy-  
vertical forehead, bill very stubby. White crescent (definitely  
different shape compared with Common) coming to point at top  
above eye.

Tail long and pointed- stuck out; very obvious.

Similar species: The above separates this bird from Common  
Goldeneye. My initial description of "white  
scapulars" is not very complete, as there was actually only a row  
of white spots along the scapulars. This row of white spots was  
very easy to pick up at a distance with binoculars. To me, the  
head shape and the darkness of the bird were key features.

Any disagreement with ID: No.

Viewing conditions: Good. Excellent on 25th. Bird about 250  
yards away on 24th. 10 x 50 Bushnell  
binoculars and 25X Balscope Sr telescope. Light both days good.

Previous experience: None, but familiar with Common Goldeneye.

References used: None.

Field notes made: immediately. This form: April 14.



## DOCUMENTATION OF EXTRAORDINARY BIRD SIGHTING

Barrow's Goldeneye (1 male), 25 Mar 1984, Forney L., Fremont Co., Iowa.

Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52240

Other observers: M. Nolan (17 Mar); E. & E. Armstrong, D. Thompson, R. Silcock (24 Mar); C. Bendorf, T. Staudt, T. Bray, B. & L. Padelford, B.J. & S. Rose, B. Wilson, J. Schaufenbuel, S. Dinsmore, and others (25 Mar).

Time: 7:10 to 7:45 AM; off and on until 11 AM

Habitat: Large Missouri River bottom lake.

"The most obvious thing is the white facial mark which is very elongated up and down compared to the Common Goldeneyes present. Also noted is the dark portion coming down to the water line at the neck and the small row of light dots across the darker back. Sawed-off short tail; white under parts; white front; dark head (appeared greenish at times). Light eye. Bill all dark. Head sort of flat on back and rounded in front; not too sharp a forehead." Row of dots seen later with Questar were more like vertical marks parallel to dark extension along shoulder. I cannot explain why the head looked green at times.

Song: not heard

Behavior: swimming and diving; flew twice.

Conditions: Sunny, rear light at about 45 degrees; 100-200 yards (est); 8x binocs, 20x scope, 50x Questar.

Similar species: Vertical white mark on face, long dark shoulder mark, row of white marks on back, and head shape all eliminate Common Goldeneye.

Agreement: all.

Previous experience: Seen once in Alaska.

References/time used: Field guides used after viewing.

Time of notes/typed: Dictated while viewing; written 6 days later.

What species? Barrow's Goldeneye How many? 1Location? Forney Lake, Fremont Co, IowaType of habitat? shallow, marshy edged lakeWhen? date(s): March 25, 1984 time: 7 am to 8:30 am (est)Who? your name and address: THOMAS J. STAUDTothers with you: Carl Benderf, Tom Kentothers before or after you: Eugene Armstrong, Ross Silcock many others

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

Medium sized compact duck with a short dark bill. <sup>The bird</sup> ~~had~~ a glossy dark head with a crescent shaped white area on its cheeks.  
Neck, breast, forward sides and underparts white.

Back, rump, tail, and flanks black.

The bird had a series of white dots in the shoulder area and a small white wing patch above the flanks.

The black on the back extended forward and down in a finger like projection dividing the neck/breast area from the white sides.

The birds posture gave it the appearance of continually leaning forward. The overall size was comparable to nearby Common Goldeneye.

Similar species and how eliminated:

Common Goldeneye have a white spot, not a crescent on the cheek, a greenish head and show much more white on the body and folded wings.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? NO

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:  
Sunny and clear, excellent viewing conditions sun behind us and to our right side  
20x scope

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

many sightings of common Goldeneye, none of Barrow's

References and persons consulted before writing description:

Carl Benderf, Tom Kent observations during sighting, The Audubon Society Master Guide to Birding

How long before field notes made? 10 hrs this form completed? same day as sighting



84-07

BIRD DOCUMENTATION FORM

CARL J. BENDORF  
825 7TH AVENUE  
IOWA CITY IA 52240

SPECIES: Barrow's Goldeneye NUMBER: 1  
LOCATION: Forney's Lake COUNTY: Fremont  
DATE: 25 March 1984 TIME: 7AM TO 10:30AM

HABITAT: \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIPTION: Very similar to nearby Common Goldeneyes except for the following: Black on back more extensive in that it came down further on sides of sitting bird and also dipped down sides of bird on the front of the flank, almost dividing breast from flanks. Sides, breast, underparts all white. A distinct row of neat white patches on scapulars formed a horizontal stripe on side of bird. Head and neck all solid dark color with a slight greenish cast. Large white crescent behind bill on cheek. Profile of head was distinctly flattened on back of head with a forward bulging forehead. Effect of head shape gave impression that bird was always leaning forward. Bill was smaller and stubbier than that of Commons. Feet were orange.

Bird dove and swam quite actively. Several times it got up and flew several hundreds down lake (usually accompanied by a female goldeneye species).

SIMILAR SPECIES--COMMENTS: The Common Goldeneye is eliminated by the above described pattern of black and white on sides and back, the large white crescent contrasted to the smaller round spot on face, and the head shape.

AGREEMENT/DISAGREEMENT OF OTHERS: Others present and in agreement included Tom Kent, Tom Staudt, Ross Silcock, Joe Schafenbuel, Steve Dinsmore, Loren & Babs Padelford, Tanya Bray, BJ & Sharon Rose, and Jim Sinclair.

LIGHT CONDITIONS: Excellent with bright sun at our backs

DISTANCE: 75-200 yds. (Estimated) EQUIPMENT: 25X scope, 7X binos

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND SIMILAR SPECIES: First encounter with Barrow's, quite familiar with Common Goldeneye.

REFERENCES, PERSONS CONSULTED BEFORE WRITING DESCRIPTION: National Geographic Guide, Master Guide.

FIELD NOTES MADE? 6 Hours THIS FORM DONE? 1 month

Barrow's Goldeneye - 1

March 25, 1984

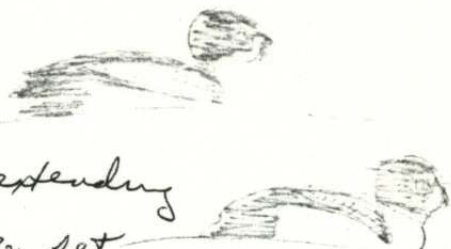
Forney's Lake, Fremont County, Iowa

Description: Bill dark. Head dark

and puffy. Crescent-shaped

white ~~mark~~ mark before eye + extending

above it. Dark body w/ loon-like set

of spots on wing. Dives. Dark before wing extends almost  
to waterline.

Optical equipment, + other viewing conditions: Sunny.  
Late morning. Bird north of us. 20x scope. Not hard  
to see. Ross Silcock called me about the bird; I came looking  
for it. Many other observers were there, incl. Ross, ~~Bob Wilson~~,  
Carl Bendorf, BT Rose. Used a field guide

- Bob Wilson


Written 5/25/84 from  
notes taken while watching  
the bird.

Rt 1 Box 41

Hastings, Ia 51540



## BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD.

1. Species Barrow's Golden-eye ♂ 2. Number of birds: 1
3. Location Forney's Lake County: Fremont
4. Date: Mar. 25, 1984 5. Time bird seen: 11:40 AM to 12:15 P.M.
6. Description of size, shape and color-pattern (describe in great detail all parts of the plumage, and beak and feet coloration, in addition, to the diagnostic characteristics, but include only what actually was seen in the field):
-  Diving duck, dark head with elongated white area in front of and a bit below eye. Neck white, sides white. Back black with white streaks separated by black. Black area at shoulder extended a bit into white side. Bill dark, tail dark. Bird swimming & diving during entire obs. period.
7. Description of voice, if heard: not heard
8. Description of behavior: Diving, swimming and eating what looked like a sizeable fish.
9. Habitat - general: Forney's Lake  
specific: well out in lake, a bit north of the center, away from large Snow Goose flock.
10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8, Explain:  
Common Golden-eye - white area on head larger in this bird, back black with a few white streaks. Commons nearby for comparison. Black from back came into white side a bit more than on common.
11. Distance (how measured)? 1/4 mile est. 12. Optical equipment: 15-60X scope  
20X scope
13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you): Sunny day, sun behind observers
14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species: P.P had seen in Washington.
15. Other observers: Lewis, Corey & Brian Blewens, Paul Johnson, Rogers, Sharp
16. Did the others agree with your identification? yes
17. Other observers who independently identified this bird: Ross Silcock, Joe Schaufelbuehl, Steve Dinsmore + many others.
18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:  
Reviewed Robbins, Peterson, Geoguide & Masterguide enroute to area & during obs. They confirmed the obs. but did not influence descn.
19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? during obs for notes, 9 hours this sheet.
- Signature Peter C. Peterson Address: 235 McClellan Blvd
- Date: Mar. 25, 1984 City, State: ~~235 McClellan Blvd.~~ Dan IA 52803

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF  
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

84-07

1. Species Barrow's Goldeneye (Bucephala islandica) 2. Number 1 ♂  
3. Location Forney Lake (Freemont Co.) Iowa  
4. Date: March 31, 1984 5. Time Bird Seen: 3:10 P.M. to 3:45 P.M.

6. Description of size, shape and color-pattern (describe in great detail all parts of the plumage, and beak and feet coloration, in addition, to the diagnostic characteristics, but include only what actually was seen in the field):

Medium size duck with dark head + back and white sides and breast. Bird had two rows of 5 or 6 white spots on back (scapulars) and otherwise the back was black. Duck had a crescent shaped mark going ~~front~~<sup>m</sup> in front of eye down the cheek. Eye was yellowish. Bill appeared dark or grayish.

7. Description of voice, if heard: NOT HEARD

8. Description of behavior: Swimming - diving - feeding

9. Habitat - general: Fairly shallow, weedy lake.

specific: The Goldeneye was feeding in what is probably one of the

10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8. Explain: deeper parts of the lake

Common Goldeneye has roundish spot in front of eye and does not have as dark of a back - has more white streaks on back

11. Distance (how measured)?

100 yd.

12. Optical equipment:

25X SCOPE

also 33X SCOPE

13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):

Clear - sunny

14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:

I have seen this species once before in Neb and have seen many Common

15. Other observers: Francis Moore - Gene Armstrong - many before

Goldeneyes

16. Did the others agree with your identification? Yes

17. Other observers who independently identified this bird: Ross Silcock - many others

18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:

None were needed.

19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? 1 day

Signature: Robert X. Myers Address: 1236 Sylvio Ave.

Date: April 7, 1984 City, State: Waterloo, Iowa



What species? Barrow's Goldeneye (Bucephala islandica) How many? 1 ♂ and possibly a female

Location? Forney Lake, Fremont Co., IA

Type of habitat? Open Fresh Water with cattail edge.

When? date(s): March 31, 1984 time: 3:10 pm to 3:45 pm

Who? your name and address: Francis L. Moore, 336 Fairfield St., Waterloo, IA 50703

others with you: Bob Myers, Eugene Armstrong

others before or after you: m.ob.

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

I was scanning the ducks at the lake checking over the Common Goldeneye when I noticed that ~~the~~ one of the male Goldeneye's had a different shaped <sup>white</sup> spot on its head. Bob and I had been told that the Barrow's Goldeneye had not been seen since 3/29/84 but thought we would check to see if it was still there or not. The bird ~~was~~ looked the same size as the Common Goldeneye around it. The bird had a definite crescent shaped white arc between its eye and bill and extending below the eye. The bird's head seemed to have a purple sheen to it but it was not that evident even with the sun shining from that distance. The bird's breast was white and its side (showing above the water) was white. The bird's head had a steeper slope to its forehead than the Common Goldeneye next to it. The spotting on the bird's back was not as extensive as on the Common Goldeneye. The bird's tail was black and its eye ~~was~~ was light colored. Its bill did not seem as long as the Common Goldeneye. The black color of the bird's back extended down in an arc onto the bird's side just behind the breast. No voice was heard. There was a female that stayed beside the male Barrow's all the time that it was in view. At the time I did not make note of differences between it and the Common Goldeneyes except the front ~~half of its bill was yellow.~~

Similar species and how eliminated: ~~Male Common Goldeneye has a round white patch between its eye and bill on the side of its head not a white crescent like this bird had.~~

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? No not the male, that I know of.

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: Sunny light coming from behind us at approx 100 yd. using 25x60 Spacemaster and 33x + 55x 90 Celestron telescopes.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: first time I have seen Barrow's Goldeneye. Have lots of experience with Common Goldeneye

References and persons consulted before writing description: None

How long before field notes made? At sighting this form completed? 6 hours

MAIL TO: T. H. Kent, Field Reports Editor, 211 Richards Street, Iowa City IA 52240



What species? Barrow's Goldeneye How many? 1Location? Forney's Lake, Fremont County, IowaType of habitat? open lake, marshy edgeWhen? date(s): April 6, 1984 time: 2:00 to 2:30 P.M.Who? your name and address: Beth Proescholdt, Liscomb, Iowaothers with you: Phyllis Harris, Marilyn Lekwaothers before or after you: many

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

Dark head (appeared black) with crescent of white on sides of face, black across back <sup>+ tail</sup> with white patches on scapulars appearing as white dots + sometimes long <sup>narrow</sup> spots. Black of back extended onto sides of breast - much further than as a long triangular extension a Common Goldeneye's; white breast + underparts, including throat. Except for a short time it was diving + feeding (I assume) almost constantly. Once I thought I saw a female near it, but couldn't find it again.

Similar species and how eliminated: Common Goldeneye - the bird I saw had much more black on its back, + down onto its side of its breast than a Common Goldeneye, as well as a crescent white face spot instead of round.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? no

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:

Clear day, sun behind + to side. 2/5 across lake, then closer about 50-60 feet (+/-) - binoculars + ~~telescope~~ telescope

Previous experience with species and similar ones: never a Barrow's, but manyReferences and persons consulted before writing description: Field Guides - Petersens, Robbins et al, National GeographicHow long before field notes made? 1/2 an hour this form completed? April 10