

Oldsquaw (1 male)

March 3, 1991

2:30-3:00 p.m.

Carter Lake, Omaha, Douglas County and Pottawattamie County, Ia

Observer: Tanya E. Bray, 1107 Ironwood Court, #186, Bellevue, NE 68005

With me: Alan Grenon

Before me: Jerry Toll, Babs & Loren Padelford

**Description:**

A small duck, much smaller than Ring-billed Gull in direct comparison, and slightly shorter in length with a much smaller head than Common Goldeneye in direct comparison. Head mostly white, with a dusky crown [the dusky gray color also extended down the back of the head], and a rather thick slightly diagonal black mark in the lower cheek area below the eye and just above the neck. Bill shiny dark black for basal two-thirds and bright pink for distal one-third. Eye dark. Throat white. Upper breast tannish gray, smudgy. Lower breast and belly white. Mantle dark grayish, with long pale gray to whitish scapular feathers. Wings entirely dark [reported by AG]. Tail on this bird not the "pintail" seen in breeding plumage.

**Behavior:**

Swimming, occasionally diving with wings held slightly open just before submerging. With Common Goldeneye. As I watched the bird swam from the Nebraska side across the lake into Iowa.

**Similar species:** Small size, whitish head, black and pink bill, dark body distinguishes this bird from all other diving ducks.

**Book consulted:** none

**Equipment:** 25 x spotting scope, 7 x 26 binoculars

**Conditions:** Sun over right shoulder, clear, good viewing conditions

**Written:** 2 hours after sighting.