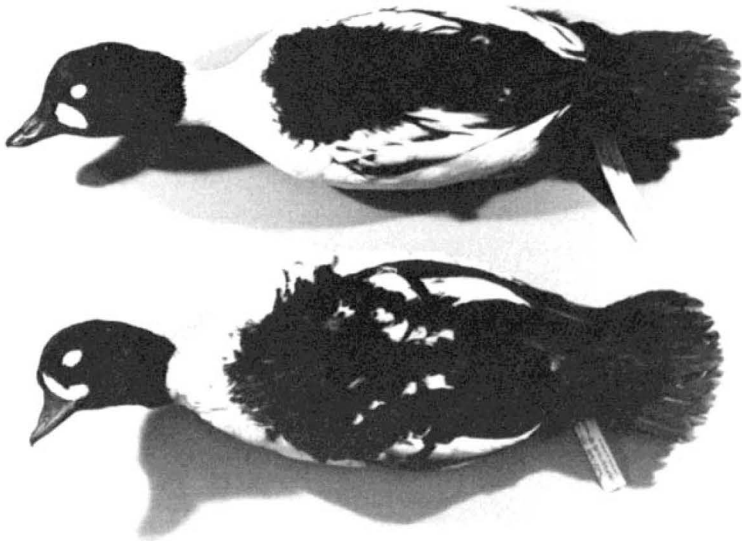


A NEW BIRD FOR OKLAHOMA: BARROW'S GOLDENEYE

BY RANDY C. RUSHING AND JACK D. TYLER

At 0740 on 14 January 1984, as Randy C. Rushing and Bob T. Coleman hunted ducks from their blind on the east shore of Lake Ellsworth 3 miles west and 1¼ north of Elgin in Comanche County, Oklahoma, Rushing shot two drake goldeneyes as they banked in to the decoys. The day was overcast and bitterly cold: northeast winds had altered the actual temperature of 23°F (-5°C) to a windchill near 0°F (-18°C) and the lake, except for a few small openings, was solidly frozen over. It was in one of these open pockets near shore that the



*BARROW'S GOLDENEYE AND COMMON GOLDENEYE DRAKES*

*Note whiter secondaries and upper secondary coverts of Common Goldeneye at top. Differences between shape of bills (stouter basally in Barrow's) and white facial patches are also evident. In life, head sheen of Barrow's is deep blue-black, of Common, emerald green. Top specimen is Univ. Oklahoma Mus. Zool. No. 2273, bottom specimen is Cameron Univ. Mus. Zool. No. 902. Photo by John S. Shackford.*

decoys were set. The water here was approximately four feet deep and very turbid. While waiting for more waterfowl to decoy, Rushing casually glanced at the two drakes lying side-by-side in the blind; something about them, though not obvious at first, was nonetheless genuinely different. For one thing, the iridescence of one bird's head shone deep blue-black instead of dark green when the light struck it at just the right angle. Rushing knew from years of hunting experience that the other bird, whose head *did* glisten emerald green, was most certainly a Common Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*). Upon closer inspection of the unusual drake, he could see that in place of a round white spot in front of and below its eye (a diagnostic character of *B. clangula*), a white crescent extended from the base of its bill upward past eye-level. Before him was a duck with which he was familiar only from pictures in sporting magazines. It was a Barrow's Goldeneye (*B. islandica*), a species rarely seen in Oklahoma.

According to Bellrose (1976, *The ducks, geese and swans of North America*, 2nd ed., Stackpole Books, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, p. 423), Barrow's Goldeneye spends the winter primarily along the northwest Pacific Coast from the Aleutian Islands to San Francisco Bay, although small numbers winter on the Atlantic Coast from Long Island to Newfoundland. The A.O.U. Check-list of North American birds (6th ed., 1983, American Ornithologists' Union, Allen Press Inc., Lawrence, Kansas, p. 93) considers it to be "casual" during winter southward from southern Canada through the interior of the continent to southern New Mexico, Texas, and Kansas.

Jack D. Tyler prepared the specimen for the Cameron University Museum of Zoology (CUMZ 902) in Lawton, Oklahoma. It weighed 1045.6 grams and standard measurements were: total length 460, tail 84, wing 235, tarsus 50, and culmen 32 mm. The skull was fully pneumatized, subcutaneous fat moderate. Interspersed among the white of the upper breast and along the sides were a few black feathers, and several gular feathers were dull brown.

Sebastian T. Patti has thrice reported drake Barrow's Goldeneyes from Lake Carl Etling in Cimarron County, at the far end of the Oklahoma Panhandle. These were identified by Patti and other participants of the annual National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count based at Kenton. One drake they observed on 31 December 1979, two on 1 January 1983 (*Am. Birds* 34:572, 1980; *Am. Birds* 37:665, 1983; Patti, S. T., 1983, *Bull. Oklahoma Orn. Soc.* 16:29-30), and another on 1 January 1984 (*Am. Birds*, in press). The four other Oklahoma sightings on record are: two adult drakes with three female-plumaged birds in Tulsa, Tulsa County, observed 22 November 1956 (Baumgartner, F. M., 1957, *Aud. Field Notes* 11:36); "several" on Hulah Reservoir, Osage County, on 28 January 1961 (Baumgartner, F. M., 1961, *Aud. Field Notes* 15:341); drake seen near Lake Humphrey, Stephens County, in February 1964; and a drake at Altus City Lake, Jackson County, on 2 February 1972 (G. M. Sutton Summary of Bird Records, Stovall Mus. Sci. & Hist., Univ. Oklahoma). The specimen reported herein is the first for the state and firmly establishes the Barrow's Goldeneye as a new species for Oklahoma.