

The last of the three mergansers was added on 3 January, when a male Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*) appeared at Lake Springfield. On 5 January, two male Greater Scaup (*Aythya marila*) were at Lake Springfield. I identified more Greater Scaup this winter than ever before. Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*), another difficult winter duck, was seen 7 January at Sangchris State Park. Then, a rather dull-looking White-winged Scoter (*Melanitta fusca*) appeared 11 January at Lake Springfield.

The moderately mild weather changed in the next few days. I recorded the temperature changes in my notes: Jan. 14 - very cold, 5 degrees, N wind, -30 wind chill; January 15 - very cold, -11 degrees to a high of -3 degrees F. By 16 January, most of Lake Springfield was frozen except the area around the warm water outlet. All of the other areas with shallower water were definitely frozen; even Lake Sangchris, a warm-water lake, was mostly frozen. When this happens I know all available waterfowl must come into the warm-water area.

I was at a small inlet on the west side of Lake Springfield, which had large numbers of ducks and geese packed into it, when I spied a small, dark, chunky duck with white spots on its face. It was a female **Harlequin Duck** (*Histrionicus histrionicus*). This was my 20th species of duck for the year. Dennis Oehmke appeared soon after that and began taking photographs. Also in that small inlet were the Black Scoter and the White-winged Scoter.

Later in January, I added a Blue-winged Teal (*Anas discors*) at Washington Park and Oehmke found a Green-winged Teal (*Anas crecca*) at the same spot on the 28th. Plus, a Northern Pintail (*Anas acuta*) was at Lake Springfield on the 29th. That made 23 species of ducks in January. The rarities hung around, but they were not always easy to find. A birder came from as far as Louisiana to see the Harlequin Duck, but we were unable to find it that day. The Harlequin Duck was last seen 12 March.

On 2 February, a female Oldsquaw (*Clangula hyemalis*) arrived at Lake Springfield. It was warming up some and Lake Springfield was opening when I found a Surf Scoter (*Melanitta perspicillata*) and a different White-winged Scoter on 7 February. Several times, I tried to see all three scoters in one day (they were there), but I was never successful.



*Harlequin Duck, 16 Jan. 1994, Springfield, one of 27 species of ducks seen there during the winter season. Photo by Dennis Oehmke.*



*Immature male King Eider, 9 Jan. 1994, Kane County. Photo by Annalee Fjellberg.*

These scoters and other waterfowl may have been in central Illinois because of zebra mussels, abundant in the Illinois River valley. However, the mussels have not yet been found in Lake Springfield; so it is more probable that the freeze-up brought the ducks.

Two other rarities were seen the first half of March. Actually, I had seen a female goldeneye with an all pinkish-orange bill on 18 February at Lake Springfield, but it was diving so much, I could not get the other field marks I needed to confirm it was a **Barrow's Goldeneye** (*Bucephala islandica*). On 4 March, Kevin Richmond and Louise Augustine told me they had rediscovered the goldeneye, and the bird's field marks seen through their Questars clinched the Barrow's Goldeneye identification. That evening, I studied the yellow-billed goldeneye for more than an hour. The head shape, with shaggy nape and triangular, bright, pinkish-orange bill and a panel and a half of white on the wing made it a Barrow's Goldeneye.

I've looked for 24 years at all the widgeons I could find for a **Eurasian Widgeon** (*Ana penelope*). On the Ides of March at Buckhart, I finally saw a beautiful drake for my first county record and the 27th species of duck for the year. The Eurasian Widgeon looked most like a brightly-marked Redhead. Oehmke photographed it the same day.

I also saw during this period a hybrid male Common Goldeneye x Bufflehead (*Bucephala albeola*) and a hybrid female Common Goldeneye x Hooded Merganser at Lake Springfield, and an albino female Gadwall (*Anas strepera*) which wintered at Sangchris State Park.

Twenty-seven species of ducks is more than I usually record in an entire year.

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## King Eider in Kane County

While birding the Tekawitha Woods Forest Preserve in Kane County 2 January 1994, I was attracted by the sounds of large numbers of Canada Geese. This investigation provided worthwhile since I observed more than 500 Canada Geese, 100 Mallards, 75 Common Goldeneye, and a pair of Hooded Mergansers. Upon my return, I observed an unusual duck swimming alone at the downstream end of