

RARE WATERFOWL IN SOUTHERN MANITOBA, 1977

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Twelve species of waterfowl are considered to occur irregularly in southern Manitoba.^{1 2} Of these, the Garganey is an exotic,⁴ the Common Eider has not been recorded in southern Manitoba since 1911², and the Ross' Goose has been reported with increasing frequency in recent years to indicate that it is a regular migrant through southern Manitoba. All the remaining species were reported in 1977, some in surprisingly high numbers. The following annotated list gives details of the various sightings.

TRUMPETER SWAN. Two were sighted at Oak Lake on October 31, and November 1, by D. R. M. Hatch. The birds, both adults, were heard trumpeting and were seen with a flock of Whistling Swans.

BRANT. A. Lindsay reported two Brant, which were associating with Canada Geese, on May 8, at Oak Hammock Marsh, and one was subsequently seen there on May 10, by A. MacLean.

CINNAMON TEAL. A male was observed and photographed at Oak Hammock Marsh by many observers after its initial discovery on May 7, by G. Holland. It was last seen on June 4. A male was also observed at Libau by J. Christie on October 6.

EUROPEAN WIGEON. A male was seen in the company of a female wigeon on the Red River at Aubigny on April 16, by C. and N. Dixon. The specific identity of the female was not determined. What was possibly the same male was seen at Breezy Point, north of Selkirk, on April 19, by D. R. M. Hatch. On October 2, G. Holland

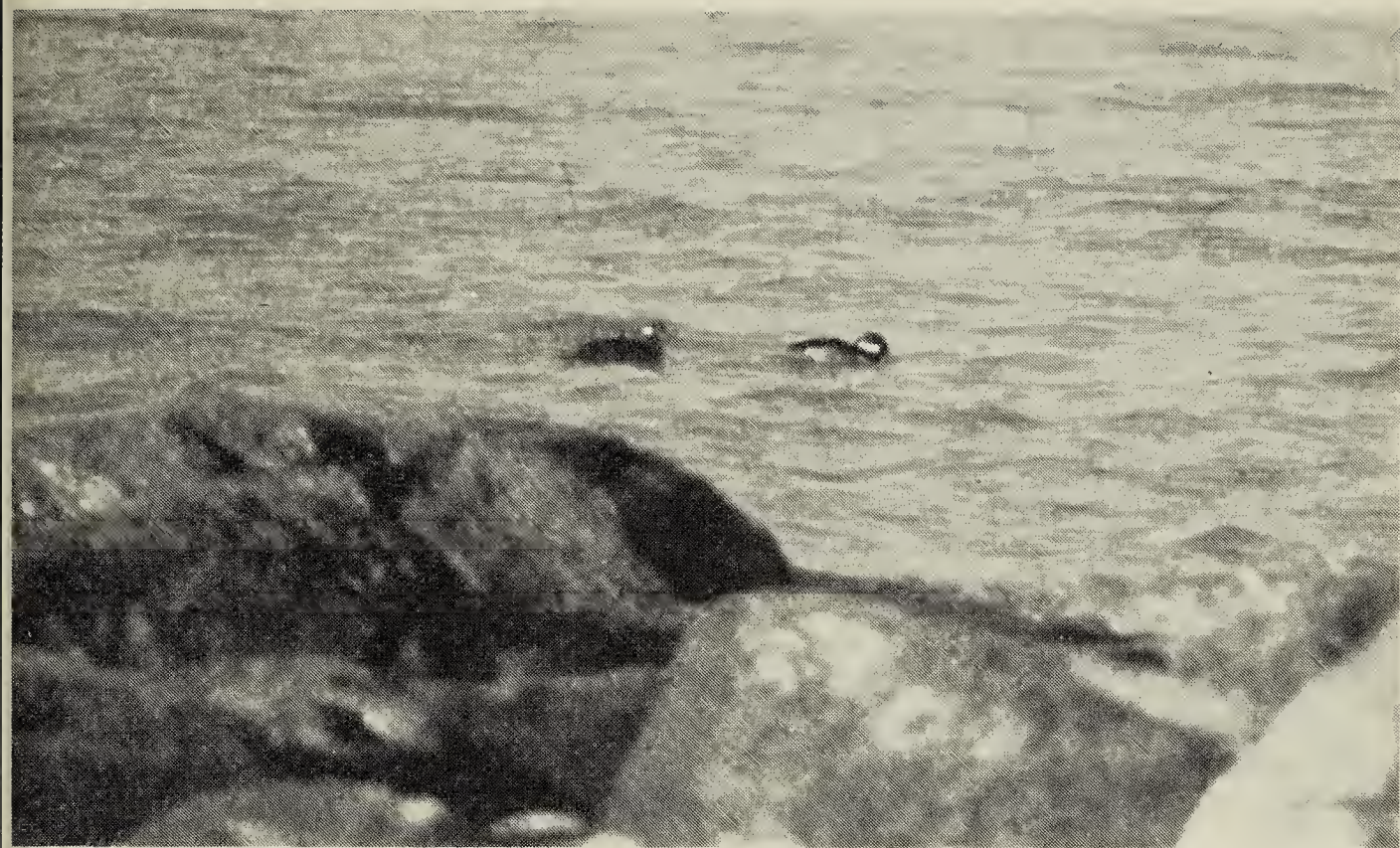
and G. Grief saw a male in a flock of American Wigeon at Oak Hammock Marsh.

BARROW'S GOLDENEYE. A pair was seen with Common Goldeneye along the Red River south of Lockport by L. and J. Holmes on April 17, and what was likely the same pair was seen at Breezy Point on April 19, by D. R. M. Hatch. On October 18, A. MacLean reported a female Barrow's Goldeneye at Clear Lake, Wasagaming. These sightings raise the number of records of this species in southern Manitoba since 1900 to at least eight involving 11 or more individuals.³

OLDSQUAW. Possibly a regular migrant in southern Manitoba.⁶ At least one was seen along the Assiniboine River diversion near Portage la Prairie on April 17, by B. Batt and R. E. Jones.

HARLEQUIN DUCK. A female or immature was seen at Victoria Beach on November 12, 13 and 19, by numerous observers after its initial discovery by Peter Taylor. The bird associated with two female Buffleheads and it allowed close approach (15 m) as it dived and loafed close inshore. This is probably the seventh record for southern Manitoba.⁵

BLACK SCOTER. This normally scarce species was recorded on three occasions; one at the Pinawa Sewage Lagoons on November 5, (Peter Taylor), two at Oak Lake on November 12, (D. R. M. Hatch), and four at Victoria Beach between November 12 and 19, (many observers). All birds were in female or immature plumage.



Harlequin and Bufflehead at Victoria Beach

Peter Taylor

SURF SCOTER. There were five records of this irregularly reported scoter this year; a male at Seven Sisters Dam on September 4, (R. W. Knapton, R. F. Koes, Peter Taylor), two immatures or females at Oak Hammock on October 22, (G. Holland), five immatures or females at Oak Lake on November 12, (D. R. M. Hatch), one immature or female at Victoria Beach on November 12, (many observers), and an immature male at Victoria Beach on November 19, (G. Holland, many other observers).

It is rather ironic that so many unusual waterfowl were seen in a year when the breeding season for ducks normally resident in the area was poor because of low water levels. No single factor can account for the diversity of unusual waterfowl records since these include wanderers from the western Great Plains (Cinnamon Teal), the east or west coastal areas (Harlequin Duck and Barrow's Goldeneye), or possibly farther afield (European Wigeon). The increase in scoter records is interesting. It may reflect the greater

number of observations at larger lakes (Lake Winnipeg, Lake Manitoba) in late fall, although this may not necessarily be the case as more scoters than usual were also recorded in the same period in southern Saskatchewan (D. R. M. Hatch, pers. comm.). Black and Surf scoters have been recorded annually in southern Manitoba since 1975, and may be regular fall migrants in small numbers through this region.

¹Field check-list of the birds of south-eastern Manitoba. 1978. Manitoba Naturalists' Society, Winnipeg.

²GODFREY, W. E. 1966. The birds of Canada. Natl. Mus. Can. Bull. No. 203, Ottawa.

³HATCH, D. R. M. 1971. Barrow's Goldeneye in Manitoba. *Blue Jay* 29:79-83.

⁴KOES, R. F. 1971. The Garganey, a new bird for Manitoba. *Blue Jay* 29:199-201.

⁵McNICHOLL, M. K. 1973. Records of the Harlequin Duck in Manitoba and adjacent regions. *Blue Jay* 31:150-152.

⁶SEXTON, D. A., and M. COLLINS. 1977. Records of the Oldsquaw in southern Manitoba. *Blue Jay* 35:96-99.