

one) are actually in short supply. A nest box some 200 yards from this nest was used successfully by a Goldeneye this year, and Bufflehead used two natural sites, one only 12 yards from the 'morgue,' near the same slough.

Another nest box, by a slough two miles to the south, contained only Barrow's Goldeneye eggs when visited by L. G. Sugden of the B.C. Game Department on May 13. However, on June 7 a female Bufflehead was flushed from the box, which now contained six Bufflehead eggs and eight Goldeneye eggs. The same clutch was also present on June 9 and June 22, and on the latter date a female Bufflehead was trapped on the nest and banded. The writer last visited this box on July 16; at this time it contained three partly incubated Bufflehead eggs (one of which was cracked and dried out), one dead Bufflehead young, two addled Goldeneye eggs, and one dead Goldeneye young. Presumably the other two young Bufflehead and five young goldeneye left the nest successfully. About a quarter of a mile to the west on the same slough a female Bufflehead was accompanied by two Goldeneye young, estimated to be about three weeks old. These were thought to be the survivors of this nesting, since poor survival was general in young of Bufflehead and Goldeneye this year, probably because of adverse weather when the young were small. No young Bufflehead were seen on this slough, although two other broods of Goldeneye were present.

Interspecific competition for nesting sites also occurs in other areas where these species breed; H. W. Burns, of Leduc, Alberta, writes me that he has on several occasions found clutches of Common Goldeneye including one to three Bufflehead eggs. However, the Bufflehead is unique among hole-nesting ducks in that it is less abundant through most of its breeding range than are the Flickers (*Colaptes* spp.) which make its holes. This relative availability of nesting sites is undoubtedly of advantage in that it reduces competition for larger cavities; competition with other ducks would

tend to eliminate this, the smallest species. Apparently this is the only known case of a Bufflehead incubating the joint clutch, and it is possible that the Goldeneye had deserted its eggs before the Bufflehead commenced laying in the box.

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Heermann's Gull in Barkley Sound, Vancouver Island

Two adult Heermann's Gulls *Larus heermanni* were observed on a floating log in Imperial Eagle Channel, Barkley Sound, on the west coast of Vancouver Island on August 1, 1955. A single Heermann's Gull was observed on August 10 of the same year in Georgia Strait, midway between Nanaimo and Vancouver. This appears to be farther north than the species regularly occurs, though Munro and Cowan, in *The Bird Fauna of British Columbia*, 1947, report a record from Alert Bay.

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Greenland White-fronted Goose on the St. Lawrence River

ONE OF THE relatively few bird subspecies easily recognizable in the field is the Greenland race of the White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons flavirostris* Dalgety & Scott. As Delacour (*Waterfowl of the World*, Vol. 1: 111, 1954) expressed it, "Live Greenland White-fronts look extremely different from all others on account of their very dark colour and bright orange bill." The bills of the other subspecies are pink.

On June 20, 1959, as my wife and I drove southwest along Route 10 paralleling the St. Lawrence, we spotted several Canada Geese in a marshy bay just beyond the village of Pointe au Pere,

near Rimouski. Since these were the first geese we had seen on our trip, we stopped to look at them. Near the half-dozen or so Canada Geese, but acting as an individual rather than as a member of a flock, was a single yearling Greenland White-front. It was close enough to enable us to make out the white mark at the base of the bill, much narrower than in adult birds. The underparts were quite uniformly colored, lacking the black mottling of the adult. The very dark color, especially of the head and neck, and the brilliant orange bill were most striking, especially when compared with birds of the North American subspecies *A. a. frontalis* seen the following day at the Quebec zoo. The June date of this observation is quite exceptional.

Almost all of the subspecifically identified records of White-fronted Geese in the eastern United States and Canada have proved to belong to the Greenland form, and it is not unlikely that a few individuals may migrate to the Atlantic seaboard of North America every year. Most of these are probably young birds; the two individuals I have seen alive (the one described above and one seen March 27, 1958, at Pea Island, North Carolina; see Chat, 22: 45, 1958), a New Jersey specimen I have recently examined, and a Quebec specimen described below, were all in their first year.

Only one specimen from Quebec is definitely known to have been of the Greenland race. This bird, preserved as a skeleton in the National Museum of Canada, was banded as a "juvenile" on July 29, 1946, at Christianshaab, west Greenland, and was captured "from a flock of about a dozen similar birds" at Métis Beach, Quebec, in late September, 1946 (Hewitt, Bird-banding, 19: 124, 1948). It is of interest to note that Métis Beach is only about 23 miles northeast of the site of our observation near Pointe au Pere.

Three other specimens of White-fronted Goose of undetermined subspecies have been taken in Quebec (Cap

St. Ignace, Cap Tourmente, Lac Jacques Cartier), and there is a sight record of three individuals on Lake St. Louis near Montreal. I am indebted to W. Earl Godfrey of the National Museum of Canada for information on the previous Quebec records of the White-fronted Goose.

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August 11, 1959

An Observation of Interspecific Strife Between Barrow's Goldeneye and Lesser Scaup

ON JULY 22, 1959, a small pothole was visited south of Riske Creek, British Columbia. One brood each of Mallard, American Widgeon, Blue-winged Teal, Barrow's Goldeneye and Lesser Scaup was noted. While watching the ducks from a distance of about 70 yards I saw the adult female Barrow's Goldeneye *Bucephala islandica* repeatedly rush the hen Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis*, chasing her from the vicinity of the latter's brood. On one of these attacks, the goldeneye rushed the scaup brood, grasped a downy in her bill and repeatedly pecked it as she flapped along the surface. After a few seconds of this activity, she abandoned the apparently dead scaup and returned to her own brood. Subsequent examination of the dead scaup revealed severe bruises about its head and neck.

It is probable that the presence of the writer and two assistants precipitated this display of strife between the two species. It is believed the outside disturbance caused the female scaup and her brood to invade the territory of the Barrow's Goldeneye. Unfortunately, time did not permit the determination of what might have been the undisturbed distribution of the ducks on the pothole.

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Canadian Wildlife Service
Edmonton, Alberta
28 October 1959



Parkes, Kenneth C. 1960. "Greenland White-fronted Goose on the St. Lawrence River." *The Canadian field-naturalist* 74(3), 162–163.
<https://doi.org/10.5962/p.341872>.

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/89257>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.341872>

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