

Barrow's Goldeneye

Bucephala islandica

STATUS

Special Concern 

Vulnerable 

19

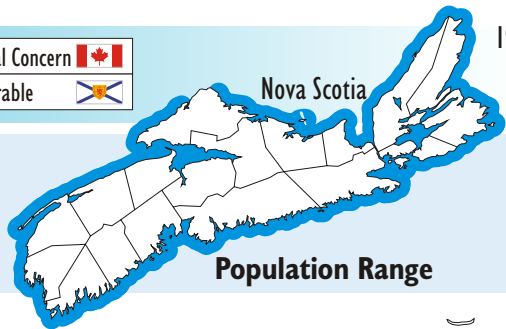


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Species Description

Barrow's Goldeneye is a medium-sized (43-48 cm) diving duck. Males are black and white with a purplish black head and dark bill. Males have a crescent-shaped white patch near the base of their bill. Females have a grayish-brown back, whitish sides and belly, and a brown head. The bill of females is mostly orange in the winter/spring and is dark in the summer. Juveniles are brownish with tan eyes and a dark bill.

Approximately 400 individuals winter along the coast of the Atlantic Provinces and Maine. Breeds in Quebec.



Habitat

Occurs in sheltered areas along the coast and occasionally in ice-free inland rivers. Migrates in May to breed in the boreal forests of Quebec in small high elevation lakes and rivers. Males migrate further north in June to moult in areas such as Hudson Bay and Labrador. They return in November to winter along the St. Lawrence River in Quebec and sheltered coastlines in the Maritimes.



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Barrow's Goldeneye is typically observed from November to April in protected areas along the coast. Look for them in Pugwash, Wallace Bay, Annapolis River and Louisburg.

Interesting Points

- Pairs are monogamous and indulge in a series of acrobatic courtship displays.
- Females nest in tree cavities that they line with downy feathers and grass.
- They feed on aquatic insects and crustaceans in the summer, and molluscs and crustaceans in the winter.



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Similar Species

Common Goldeneye:

Similar size (40-51 cm); less angled head; larger bill. Males: round white patch at base of bill; greenish head; less black on sides. Females: less rounded head; mostly black bill with an orange or yellow tip.



Male



Female

Threats to Survival

- Winter: oil spills, sediment contamination and hunting.
- Summer: forestry activities (nest destruction), logging roads (increased accessibility for anglers and hunters), and fish stocking programs.

How You Can Help

Learn to recognize this species and report sightings. Report oil spills to the Coast Guard by calling 1-800-565-1633.



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Contacts, Information & Sighting Reports

Contact: Environment Canada (506) 364-5044, www.ec.gc.ca

Info: www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca, www.qc.ec.ca/faune

Sighting Reports: 1-866-727-3447 or sightings@speciesatrisk.ca