

WV BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE REPORT FORM

Please Type or Print Legibly

Species:	Tufted Duck <i>Aythya fuligula</i>	Number: (leave blank)			
Location:	Alpine Lake, Terra Alta, Preston County	Date:	03/04/2023	Time:	9:42 am
Bird Seen:	9:42 am	To:	10:45 am	Age/Sex:	Adult Male

Description: In lieu of physical material substantiating a record (e.g., specimen, diagnostic photograph, vocal recordings) a complete written description can serve as verification for the biological record. Please be as thorough as your field notes allow. Do not feel constrained by the space provided. Additional supporting descriptions/illustrations may be attached. Note that photographs or recordings WILL NOT BE RETURNED but become part of the permanent record for the observation.

Structure: (Overall size and shape plus details on the head, feet, tail, etc.)

The bird was slightly larger than accompanying Ring-necked Ducks and both species of scaup. It had a noticeably longer neck, and a distinctive tuft which hung down from the back of the bird's head and blew in the wind. The head was rounded and not peaked like that of Ring-necked Duck.

Plumage: (e.g. markings, coloration, molt)

The upperparts, tail, undertail coverts, and breast were black. The flanks were bright white and lacked any grayish tones which helped to distinguish it from Ring-necked Duck. The head was dark blackish. (In good light, the head of Tufted Duck has a purple iridescence, but I was not able to observe that due to the viewing conditions.) The bill was bluish-gray with a dark tip and lacked the white subterminal band that is present on the bill of Ring-necked Duck. Finally, the eyes were yellow.

Description of any vocalizations, if heard:

N/A

Description of behavior:

The bird stayed with a large raft of Ring-necked Ducks, Greater Scaup, and Lesser Scaup. As it swam around, it almost constantly flicked its bill upward.

Habitat: (General and Specific)

Alpine Lake is a relatively large, deep lake set among forested hills at a high elevation. During migration, it can attract large numbers of migrating waterfowl.

Circumstances of observation: (Include details of distance to bird, optics employed, lighting in relation to observer and the bird)
When I first saw the bird, it was maybe 50 yards away, but then it moved out farther into the lake with the rest of the ducks, until it was about 100 yards away. I watched the bird through my Zeiss Terra Ed 10x42 binoculars and Kowa TSN-661 spotting scope. I took some photographs, which I am including with this report, with my Canon SX620 HS camera. The viewing conditions were not optimal. It was below freezing with a strong, steady wind and snow flurries that were heavy at times. However, the viewing conditions did not keep me from getting good views through my binoculars or scope.

Previous experience with this species:

I have seen Tufted Ducks in the United Kingdom, Kazakhstan, the United Arab Emirates, Tunisia, Yemen, as well as vagrant birds in Illinois and California.

Experiences with similarly appearing species which are eliminated by your description: (Please be specific)

The somewhat similar Ring-necked Duck is distinguished from Tufted Duck by its light gray flanks, white spur at the front of the flanks, a more peaked crown without a tuft of any kind, a grayish bill with a black tip and white subterminal band, and a shorter neck.

Other observers: (Names, Addresses, E-mail please)

If the others agree with your identification they can sign this form here. If they care to provide additional details they can submit their own report.

N/A

Additional observer signature:

Additional observer signature:

Additional observer signature:

Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and especially how did these influence this description:
None. I knew immediately what the bird was and did not need to consult any field guides. I did look at the species range maps for Tufted Duck on eBird to check its pattern of vagrancy to the eastern United States.

How long after observing this bird did you first write this description?
Later in the afternoon of the same day of the observation.

Name: David Daniels

Address: [Redacted]

Date: 03/04/2023

Signature: [Redacted]

Mail to: WV Bird Records Committee
Attn: Wil Hershberger
170 Stallion Ct.
Hedgesville, WV 25427
Or E-mail to:
wilhershberger@mac.com

Please use the space below to add any appropriate details you feel were missing from the above form or to expand on any answers whose allotted space was insufficient for a complete response:

Tufted Duck has a pattern of vagrancy to the New World, with many records from the Maritime Provinces of Canada, the northeastern Atlantic states down to Virginia, the Great Lakes region, as well as scattered records across the interior of the continent. Tufted Ducks have been reported from all of the states surrounding West Virginia.







