

# VOTING Summary

## WEST VIRGINIA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

Number: **WVBRC 2023-12**

Species: **Cinnamon Teal**

**Vote** (select only one) \_\_\_For State List \_\_\_ Against

**Reasons voting FOR the record:** (*attach more pages if necessary*)

**Reasons voting AGAINST the record:** (*attach more pages if necessary*)

**CM1** This record was misidentified as Cinnamon Teal. All evidence points to this being an adult, male bird. Blue-winged Teal fits much better based on a preponderance of evidence. Expert opinion weighs almost unanimously on this not being a Cinnamon Teal. Thus, there is no reason to think BWTE can be eliminated and the ID conclusive for CITE.

**CM2** Identification of teal, either female, juvenile, or males in eclipse plumage can be very difficult. The photos of the bird provided in the record are not particularly clear, but they show a small bird alone and among other larger ducks. The small size of the bird is supportive of a teal species. In viewing photos included with the record, along with additional photos taken of the same bird by others and provided to the committee, this bird appears to be a male in eclipse plumage, based on wing patterns. The wing pattern also eliminates Green-winged Teal. Although the expert person listed in the record says the bird can't be a male Blue-winged Teal (BWTE) because of the date observed (early August), male BWTE can be in eclipse plumage as early as July and remain in eclipse plumage through October. Thus, a male BWTE in eclipse plumage cannot be ruled out due to the date observed. While the record suggests some observers felt there was some reddish in the eye, that isn't revealed in the photos, only a dark eye. In additional photos of the bird from eBird reports, the eyes also look more darkish and don't look as red as it should in a male Cinnamon Teal (CITE). The dark line through the eye is somewhat more consistent with male BWTE than CITE in most photos. There is a line between bill and eye, with some photos suggesting a bigger line than others. However, there is some variation in eye lines in both species with BWTE usually having a broader eye line and CITE having little or no line between eye and bill as it returns to breeding plumage. The bill seems slightly more like CITE, but this can be deceptive depending on camera angle, etc. BWTE have similar bills, and it is difficult to determine between the two species based on this characteristic when they are not together. A male CITE also can occasionally have a downward point at the at the end of the bill, but not always. No downward point is observed in any of the photos for this bird. The coloration of the bird in most of the photos seems more buffy overall which is supportive of a male CITE. The head shape in the

photos in the record seems to show a more sloped forehead rather than the rounded forehead found in CITE and BWTE. Thus, there are some features of this bird that support BWTE and others that are supportive of CITE. Considering all of these features for an eclipse plumage male BWTE and CITE, it is difficult to say with certainty that this bird is a Cinnamon Teal, and a hybrid or potentially a male BWTE cannot be completely ruled out.

**CM3** I believe this bird to be a Blue-winged Teal after engaging in discussion with members of the WVBRC and externally with birders more familiar with the field marks of Cinnamon Teal in this plumage.

**CM4** Very good writeups from both parties. Not sure what to make of this bird despite the write ups and written detail from multiple observers. One stipulates “female type” and the other a juvenile male. I see a large spatulate bill of perhaps a CITE but the photos also show the stronger post ocular eyeline and relatively strong eye arcs. These go against CITE in my opinion. Seems like a mixed bag and I’m not willing to say it’s a 100% slam dunk CITE based on the photos and info presented.

If there’s no consensus we should discuss as a group and perhaps farm out for other opinions.

Update: Derek “farmed out” to experts and the overwhelming consensus is Blue-winged Teal and a couple hinted as a possible hybrid.

**CM5** Uncertainty raised by many experts over the identification.

**CM6** Further review in committee resulted in consensus of doubt on Cinnamon Teal I.D.

**CM7** After a lengthy discussion and input during the WV Bird Records Committee Annual Meeting on March 8, 2025, it was determined by a majority of the committee that the entry is in fact a Blue-winged Teal.