

WV BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE REPORT FORM

Please Type or Print Legibly

Species: Common Teal (*Anas crecca crecca*) Number: (leave blank) 2015-7
Location: Rehe Wildlife Management Area Date: 3/26/15 Time: 10:00
Bird Seen: 10:00 To: 10:30 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.)

Small waterfowl. Small, thin, dark gray bill. Bill was spatulate shaped. Plump, round head. Eye was dark. Neck was short. Body was compact for a dabbling duck, otherwise fairly typical in shape for a dabbler. Wings folded to meet at the tips before the tip of the tail. Legs and feet were grayish. Toes were webbed.

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

Head was a dark rufous color on the crown and lower cheek. Upper cheek was green surrounding the eye and extending to the nape in a continuous patch. This green patch was offset from the rufous by pale lines which were bolder than accompanying Green-winged Teal. Breast was mottled gray with less obvious buffy influence than Green-winged Teal. Flanks were gray with coarse barring. No vertical white spur seen. Buffy undertail offset by obvious black borders. Back and wings were grayish. Horizontal white stripe on resting bird was largely obscured by scapulars if present.

Description of any vocalizations, if heard:

No vocalizations noted.

Description of behavior:

Bird was seen swimming with a group of 10 Green-winged Teal. Bird fed by dabbling. Similar in behavior to Green-winged Teal and other dabblers.

Habitat: (General and Specific)

General: Wetland/pond surrounded by wooded area and in a complex of other small wetlands/ponds.

Specific: Rehe Wildlife Management Area in Arthurdale, WV.

Circumstances of observation: (Include details of distance to bird, optics employed, lighting in relation to observer and the bird)

Bird was viewed from 75-100 yards away. Kowa TSN 883 Prominar scope with 20-60x zoom eyepiece and Swarovski Swarovision 10x42 EL binoculars used to visualize. Bird was somewhat backlit though conditions were overcast/bright. View was unobstructed.

Previous experience with this species:

Have seen Common Teal before in Maryland and New Jersey

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

Green-winged Teal is a common migrant through the area and seen regularly and frequently. No other birds are readily confused with Common Teal.

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.

David Daniels, Hannah Clipp, and numerous others.

Additional observer signature:

Additional observer signature:

Additional observer signature:

Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and especially how did these influence this description:

The Sibley Guide to Birds, National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America, www.sibleyguides.com

How long after observing this bird did you first write this description?

4 weeks after signing to fill out this form. Field notes made to ebird on the day of observation.

Name:

Derek D. Courtney, MD

Address:

Date:

4/20/15

Signature:

Mail to: WV Bird Records Committee
Attn: Wendell Argabrite
111 Jefferson Park Dr.
Huntington, WV 25705
Or E-mail to: wargabrite@aol.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:

It should be noted that, at present, Common Teal is not elevated to species status by the AOU/ABA. Numerous other bodies do make a species differentiation between Common and Green-winged Teal. Regardless, this subspecies (or species) is deserving of consideration by the BRC and should be evaluated for inclusion of the WV ornithological record in light of potential split in the future and treatment of other subspecies in the past.

For brevity's sake, the size, structure, and plumage of this dabbling duck eliminates anything not in the Green-winged Teal complex. No other bird shows a rufous head with green facial patch, green speculum, gray body, etc.

The crux of the committee's evaluation will be on separating this bird as a Common Teal. In this case, notably, the bird in question has bold pale lines demarcating the green facial pattern. Bolder than accompanying male Green-winged Teal. The head was also slightly lighter rufous than accompanying Green-winged Teal. The breast was decidedly grayish with very little buffy influence as opposed to the accompanying and normal Green-winged Teal which showed obvious buffy tones to their breasts. This bird completely lacked the bold white spur ahead of the grayish flanks that is present on Green-winged Teal. These are all appropriate characteristics for Common Teal as opposed to Green-winged Teal.

A note on hybridization: Intergrades between Common and Green-winged Teal have been recorded. Those birds show characteristics of both parentage. This bird showed no characteristics more appropriate to Green-winged than Common Teal.

A note on provenance: Any vagrant waterfowl should have its origin examined. This bird was free-flying and showed no evidence of banding. It behaved exactly as the other wild Green-winged Teal behaved. It should also be noted that the timing is fitting with the historical pattern of vagrancy to the US. It should also be noted that several other Common Teal were reported in nearby states overlapping this bird's presence. It should also be noted that a Eurasian Wigeon of presumed wild origin was also found in the state over a similar time frame. This indicates a possible influx of Eurasian birds.

It should also be noted that this bird was evidently first reported to ebird by David Daniels on 3/25 and first documented with photos by Hannah Clipp on 3/26. Both of these individuals deserve recognition in the WV records.



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