

3-1998

## Mystery Duck at Sinninger Waterfowl Production Area, York County

Joel G. Jorgensen

*Nebraska Ornithologists' Union*, joel.jorgensen@nebraska.gov

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/nebbirdrev>



Part of the [Ornithology Commons](#), [Poultry or Avian Science Commons](#), and the [Zoology Commons](#)

---

Jorgensen, Joel G., "Mystery Duck at Sinninger Waterfowl Production Area, York County" (1998). *Nebraska Bird Review*. 1003.  
<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/nebbirdrev/1003>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Nebraska Bird Review by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

# MYSTERY DUCK AT SINNINGER WATERFOWL PRODUCTION AREA, YORK COUNTY

Joel G. Jorgensen, 1218 Jackson St., Blair, NE 68008

On the evening of 8 May 1997, I was scanning the shorebirds and ducks at the cattle-yard basin of Sinninger WPA, York County. Most of the 300 or so puddle ducks were Blue-winged Teals (*Anas discors*), but also present were Green-winged Teal (*A. crecca*), American Wigeon (*A. americana*), Gadwall (*A. strepera*), Northern Shoveler (*A. clypeata*), and a Cinnamon Teal (*A. cyanoptera*). I eventually noticed a male duck in breeding plumage that superficially resembled a Baikal Teal (*A. formosa*). All descriptive discussion that follows is of male ducks in breeding plumage.

The bird was similar in size, shape, and behavior to the Green-winged Teals present. The bill was black. The pattern of the head is difficult to describe, but only two colors were involved--dark green and a buffy yellow or cream. The dark green extended in front and below the eye in a circular pattern up to the crown and back towards the nape. The pattern was reminiscent of the green area on the head of an American Wigeon, but on this bird the crown, nape, and hindneck also were green. The area near the base of the bill, the throat, and the side of the neck were a warm, buffy yellow. The breast was a pinkish brown color, which faded into gray along the flanks and mantle. The flanks also possessed indistinct blackish vermiculations. The "rear" (undertail and uppertail coverts and tail) portion of the bird was black. There was a small area of white adjacent to the black undertail coverts, a feature present on Northern Shoveler and American Wigeon.

The bird I observed appeared similar to a painting that appeared in *Birding* (26: 170). That bird was ultimately identified as an apparent American Wigeon X Northern Pintail hybrid. While the face pattern is essentially the same, there are differences between that bird and mine. My bird had no brown tones or green extending down from the eye area to the throat. In addition, my bird had an all-dark bill.

Even more similar to the bird I observed was one that appeared at Saint-Zacherie,

Quebec, on 27 April 1990. A color photograph of this bird appeared in *American Birds* (44: 379). After comparing my notes with this photograph, I have concluded that the birds appear virtually identical. The only minor field mark that is different is that my bird lacked the white, indistinct breast band separating the breast and the flanks (present on Green-winged Teals).

It was concluded that the Green-winged Teal was one of the parent species of the Quebec hybrid. I, too, reached the same conclusion about my hybrid before seeing the photograph of the Quebec hybrid. The other parent species of these two identical hybrids is less obvious and, to this point, unresolved.