

Adrian Binns Ornithological Study 1/09

# ICE BUILD UP ON BIRDS: AN OBSERVATION

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**Black Scoter** : ice pellets on back - saltwater



**Sanderling** : ice pellet hanging off of breast - saltwater





## Tundra Swan : ice build up on and around bill - freshwater



- In all 3 cases we had very cold air temperatures around 0F or below
- In the case of the scoter and sanderling there were the only 2 birds with this out of many shorebirds and ducks
- Bill encrustation or ice sheathing was noticeable on about a quarter of the 20 swans in the group
- Is this a breakdown in natural oiling in certain individuals?
- Could it have anything to do with ambient air temperature and the relative salinity of the water? But why does it not occur on all birds?