

Pacific Loon

9 Nov 1991

Pleasant Creek S.P., Linn Co., IA

*Fuller, *Kent, *Dankert, *Pinkston

*M. Proescholdt, *Bendorf; IBL 62:12, 70, Fuller 1962

Record Number: 91-26

Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATIONS:

Jim Fuller, 9 Nov, 6 Longview Knoll, Iowa City, IA 52240

Thomas H. Kent, 9 Nov, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246

David L. Dankert, 10 Nov, 5600 Plainview Dr. NW, Cedar Rapids,
IA 52405

Randall Pinkston, 10 Nov, 526 Reno, Iowa City, IA 52245

Mark Proescholdt, 16 Nov, Box 65, Liscomb, IA 50148

Carl J. Bendorf, 19 Nov, 845 Cypress Ct., Iowa City, IA 52245

PHOTOGRAPH:

J. O. Durbin, 10 Nov, P-0293 [not circulated on first review]

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 62:12

Records Committee: IBL 62:70

Fuller, J. 1992. Pacific Loon at Pleasant Creek. IBL
62:113-114.

VOTE: 1 A-P, 6 A-D

A-D, Good diagnostic details (presence of chinstrap and sharp demarcation of throat from sides of neck) from multiple observers.

A-D, Good descriptions for a Pacific Loon were provided.

REVOTE at meeting of 11 Apr 1992 after viewing photo: 7 A-D

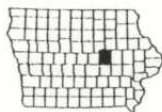
Jim Durbin (JiD), Marion; David Edwards (DE), Ames; Bery Engebretsen (BE), Des Moines; Peter Ernzen (PE), Ida Grove; Carolyn J. Fischer (CF), Mason City; James L. Fuller (JF), Iowa City; Rita Goranson (RGo), Mason City; Douglas C. Harr (DH), Larchwood; L. Paul Hertzell (LPH), Ames; Ann M. Johnson (AMJ), Norwalk; Matt C. Kenne (MCK), Algona; Thomas H. Kent (THK), Iowa City; Darwin Koenig (DK), Ankeny; Sharon R. Laub (SRL), Rippey; Mike Lillie (ML), Ames; Darwin Dean Mosman (DDM), Elkhart; Curt Nelson (CN), Mason City; Babs K. Padelford (BKP), Bellevue, NE; Loren J. Padelford (LJP), Bellevue, NE; Marietta A. Petersen (MAP), Walnut; Peter C. Petersen (PCP), Davenport; D. Randall Pinkston (DRP), Iowa City; Don Poggensee (DPo), Ida Grove; Diane C. Porter (DCP), Fairfield; Beth Proescholdt (BPr), Liscomb; Mark Proescholdt (MPr), Liscomb; Lee A. Schoenewe (LAS), Spencer; Jim Sinclair (JSi), Indianola; Mike Stegman (MS), Garwin; Iowa City; Jan L. Walters (JLW), Mason City; Hank Zaletel (HZ), Colo.

4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50010

NESTING SANDHILL CRANES AT OTTER CREEK MARSH, TAMA COUNTY

DON POGGENSEE

I received a call on 5 June 1992 from Pat Schlarbaum of the Iowa D.N.R. non-game office, telling me of reports that Sandhill Cranes with young had been seen east of Tama at Otter Creek Marsh. Pat knew of my interest in the Sandhill Cranes and my desire to photograph them.



That noon I called Ed Weiner at the Otter Creek Unit for more information. He confirmed that indeed they had been seeing Sandhill Cranes with young on and near the marsh, and I was welcome to come attempt to photograph them.

After work that night, my wife Pam and I drove from Ida Grove to Ed's office at Otter Creek Marsh east of Tama. Meeting Ed early the next morning in the rain, he drove us around Otter Creek and we saw one pair with two young and a second pair about a mile away to the northwest. All the birds were a long distance from us feeding in newly planted corn fields near the edge of the marsh.

Looking the area over I decided that I might be able to approach the pair with the two young by following a drainage ditch that was on the north side of the corn field that they were feeding in. We found the owner of the farm field and got permission.

Most of the rest of Saturday, 6 June 1992 I waited in a small group of trees in the drainage ditch hoping to see the cranes. Near the middle of the afternoon I was able to see and photograph them for a short time from a long distance away using a 700 MM Canon lens. Near sunset I backed out of my hiding place and returned to my Winnebago and my ever patient wife.

I decided that if I could get into my blind before or near sunrise the next morning, I would be in a good spot for better photos with clear weather. As we drove into Tama that night for dinner we talked about getting an early start the next morning and praying that the Sandhills would be using the same field again.

Very early the next morning June 7th, found me walking the half mile into the blind area and getting my blind set-up ready to record Iowa's first documented nesting of Sandhill Cranes since 1894.

As the sun was rising with enough good light, a pair of Sandhill Cranes with their two young appeared in front of me very near where I had seen them the night before. They stayed in the field and fed there for most of the morning. I was able to get several good images (see cover photo). At about 11 a.m. I heard cranes calling from another farm field quite close and behind me. I quickly backed out of my blind and crossed the drainage ditch in time to see a second pair of sandhills with one young heading back into the marsh. The wet grass that I had crawled through was about waist high, and I was able to photograph the second pair before they disappeared into the marsh.

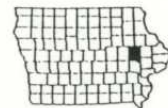
Sandhill Cranes were a common nesting species in north-central and northwestern Iowa when settlers first arrived. Because of hunting and habitat loss, their numbers dwindled rapidly. The last known Sandhill Crane nest in Iowa was found northwest of Hayfield in Hancock County (Anderson, R. M. *The Oologist* 11:263-264, 1894) in 1894. Thus it was a great joy to see Sandhill Cranes with young again in Iowa after a 98-year absence. I spent a total of 13 hours over two days to photograph the cranes. Ed Weiner was a big help in locating the area the cranes were using and for allowing us to stay overnight at the Unit Headquarters.

R.R. #1, Ida Grove, IA 51445

PACIFIC LOON AT PLEASANT CREEK

JIM FULLER

John Daniel and Pete Wickham of Cedar Rapids reported a loon that they identified as a Pacific Loon at Pleasant Creek State Recreation Area, Linn County, the morning of 9 November 1991. With kickoff time for a Hawkeye home football game imminent, I frantically searched the lake, and finally located a loon near the west shore. Tom Kent had preceded me, and was already scoping the loon. The bird was only about 100 yards away, and I wasted little time getting my scope on it.



Size was difficult to judge, because there were no other waterfowl with which to compare it, but it appeared to be smaller than a Common Loon, with correspondingly smaller head and thinner neck. The first feature that I noticed was a very sharp delineation on the side of the neck between the white foreneck and dark hindneck. Another notable early perception was a very round or bowed back of the head and neck. The previous week I had seen numerous Pacific Loons in alternate plumage in Washington state, birds which exhibited a whitish gray hindneck. Even though this bird was in basic plumage, when it turned its head just right, there was a silvery gray sheen to the back of the head and neck. The bill was straight, dark, and dagger-like.

The back was a dark gray color, and no white checking or barring was seen. On the head and face, the dark eye was just into the gray of the crown, and when the bird was facing me, I could see a narrow line or chinstrap which originated at the throat or angle between the head and neck. The bird was seen diving, but no vocalization was heard.

91-2-10

Features which separate this species from the Common Loon are size, and proportionately smaller head, neck, and bill. The sharp delineation of the light and dark on the side of the neck compares to a patterned side of the neck without a sharp delineation in Common Loon. In addition, Common Loon is lightly colored all the way around the eye and lacks a chinstrap. Red-throated Loon has a smaller bill, which often appears to be upturned, has white all the way around the eye, and the side of the neck is more patterned and not so sharply defined, all features which differed from this bird. Yellow-billed Loon is even larger than Common Loon, and has a distinctive large light colored bill.

The bird obligingly remained for many observers to view through the following weekend, and was last reported on 19 November. An added attraction was the presence of Black-legged Kittiwake, and White-winged and Surf scoters on the lake. I had two more opportunities to study the bird, at which time excellent views of the chinstrap were gained.

Prior to 1982 there were seven Iowa records for this species, which nests in the Arctic and winters primarily along the west coast. In recent years, one or two sightings have been recorded in the state annually, most in the period October-December, with a few in April-May.

I found "Advanced Birding" (Kenn Kaufmann, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1990) to be especially useful in comparing the loons in basic plumage. And yes, I was in my Kinnick Stadium seat for kickoff.

6 Longview Knoll, NE, Iowa City, IA 52240

SABINE'S GULLS AT THE QUAD CITIES

RANDALL PINKSTON

At 2 p.m. on 13 October 1991 Richard Peiser of Glen Ellyn, Illinois, observed what he suspected was an immature Sabine's Gull from a Mississippi River casino boat at Davenport, Scott County, Iowa. Later that afternoon he relocated the bird with an adult and confirmed the identification. He reported the birds to the Iowa Bird Line. The following morning Jim Fuller relocated the adult downstream from the original site.

Early that afternoon I arrived where Fuller had observed the adult. Tom Kent, Dick Tetrault and Jim Scheib joined me and together we were unable to find the birds there. At 2 p.m., on the advice of Pete Petersen, we directed our search upstream past the Highway 74 bridge in Moline, Rock Island County, Illinois. There we joined others in viewing both birds for extended periods at the Moline riverfront and across the river in Bettendorf, Iowa.

The adult (Figure 1) was in worn alternate plumage with a dark gray head and black collar. White flecking was noted on the crown at close range. The small bill was black at the base with bright yellow tip. No eye-ring was discerned. The underparts were entirely white as were the nape and neck, the rump, uppertail coverts, and forked tail. The back and scapulars were plain gray continuous with the gray of the tertials and wing coverts. The back appeared slightly paler ("frosted") relative to the coverts on the floating bird. The spread wing pattern was distinctive with secondaries, inner primary coverts, and inner primaries bright white, forming a white triangle between the gray coverts proximally and the black outer primary coverts and outer primaries distally. Narrow white "mirrors" were

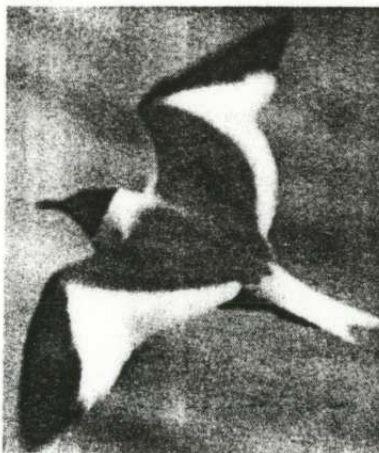


Figure 1. Adult Sabine's Gull at Bettendorf, 14 October 1991. Photo by Tom Kent.



Figure 2. Juvenile Sabine's Gull at Bettendorf, 14 October 1991. Photo by Tom Kent.

noted on the outer primaries at close range. The underwing appeared white except for a black trailing edge distally.

The juvenile (Figure 2) displayed the same striking upperwing pattern except that the adult's gray was replaced with mottled grayish-brown; this brown extended from the crown and face to the lower back and onto the sides of the breast. The fresh outer primaries were tipped with white. The forehead, rump, uppertail coverts, and entire underparts were white. The bill was all black. The forked white tail had a bold black subterminal band beyond which the rectrices were narrowly tipped with white.

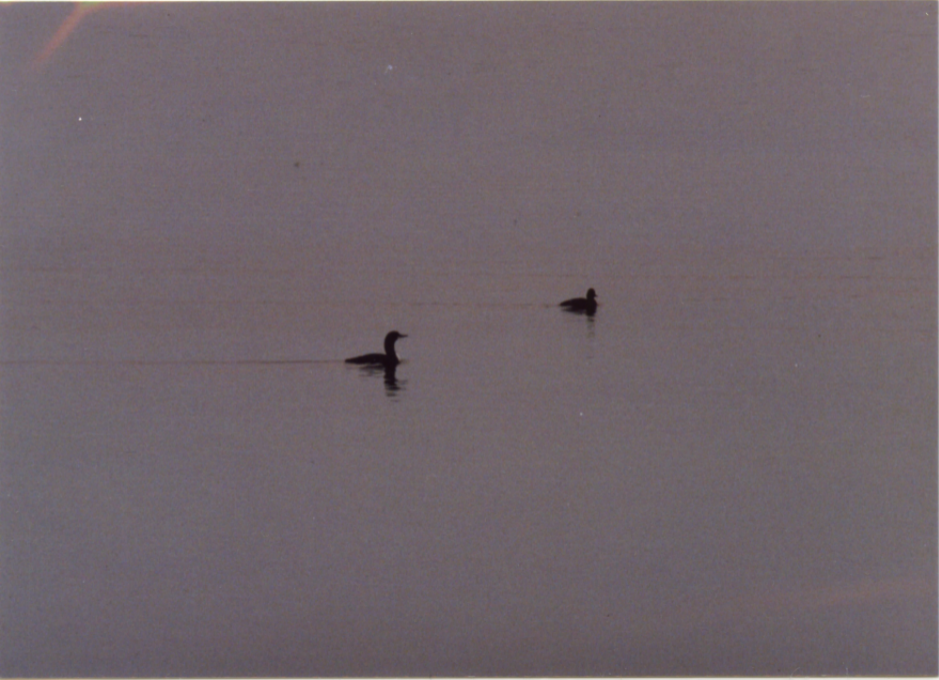
These were small gulls between one-half and two-thirds the size of nearby Ring-billed Gulls. They were high riding on the water with head and neck held erect, the wingtips angled upward. Their flight, aptly described as tern-like, was often close to the water's surface. Richard Peiser heard both birds utter "squeaky" noises.

Apparently the juvenile departed the following day while the adult remained through 26 October. Seen well, the striking upperwing pattern of Sabine's Gull is diagnostic in all plumages. The most often cited similar species is first-winter Black-legged Kittiwake which is larger and mainly white-headed.

Sabine's Gull is a circumpolar breeder that winters at sea in the southern hemisphere. Birds nesting in Canada and Greenland migrate diagonally southeast across the north Atlantic Ocean to wintering areas off the coast of southwest Africa, while those nesting in Siberia and Alaska migrate in the eastern Pacific Ocean to areas off South America (Grant 1986). Adults arrive on their breeding grounds in May/June and depart with juveniles in July/August. Most young birds spend their first summer south of the equator and depart with other adults the following April/May (Harrison 1983).

That some birds, mostly juveniles, migrate through central North America is well known (Kent 1983). A review of *American Birds* Regional Reports demonstrates a dramatic increase in Sabine's Gull sightings in recent years. The

91-26



Pacific Loon
Pleasant Creek SP, Linn Co., IA
10 Nov 1991 J. O. Durbin

P-0293

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DOCUMENTATION OF UNUSUAL BIRD SIGHTING

SPECIES: PACIFIC LOON

LOCATION: Pleasant Creek Lake State Park (Linn County)

DATE: 9 November, 1991 (5-10 minutes) 12:10-12:30PM

OBSERVER: Jim Fuller, 6 Longview Knoll, NE, Iowa City, Iowa, 52240

OTHERS: Reported by John Daniel and Pete Wickham. There at the same time as I was there Tom Kent. Later and next day Mob.

BACKGROUND: John Daniel reported to the Iowa Birdline that he and Pete Wickham had found a pacific loon and first year black-legged kittiwake at this location the morning of the 9th. After some searching, I found the bird close to the west shore. It later was relocated in the middle of the lake. Since I had to be at the Iowa football game, the time I was able to watch this bird was limited, although I did have good views for five or more minutes.

DESCRIPTION: Size was difficult to judge, because there was nothing else with which to compare it. I felt that it seemed smaller than a common loon, and that its head and neck were less bulky than those of a common loon. The first feature that I did note was a very sharp delineation on the side of the neck between the very white foreneck and the dark hindneck. The bill was straight and dagger like, and was dark. Another feature seen right away was a very round or bowed back of the head and neck. Also, the back of the head and neck was not consistently dark. When the bird turned its head, and the light was right, it appeared to be light or even a silvery gray. I was in the Pacific NW just a month previously and had the opportunity to look at many pacific loons in alternative plumage. This bird was in basic plumage, but it still gave the impression of the gray back of the head and neck. The back was a consistently dark color. On the head and face, the eye was just into the dark of the crown, and when the bird looked directly at me, I could see a narrow line or chinstrap which was really at the throat or angle between the head and neck. The bird was seen diving, but no vocalization was heard.

SIMILAR SPECIES: Common loon is larger with a proportionately larger head, neck, and bill. It also has a patterned side of neck where the dark of the hindneck is not so sharply delineated from the light of the foreneck. Common loon also has light around the eye, and does not exhibit a chinstrap. It also has some white patterning on the back.

Red throated loon is smaller with a smaller bill, which usually appears to be upturned. The pattern on the side of neck is not nearly so sharply delineated black from white as this bird had. It also has light around the eye. Yellow-billed loon is even larger than common, has most of the features of common on the neck and head, and has a distinctive large light colored bill.

OPTICS and VIEWING CONDITIONS: It was midday on a clear day. The bird was viewed at distances from 100-300 yards as looking toward the northeast to the east with a KOWA TSN-4 telescope with 20-60 zoom lens.

REFERENCES and FIELD NOTES: The Petersen "Advanced Birding" guide was consulted before and during the viewing. Notes were not made until after the football game that evening, and this form was typed on 15 November.

BACKGROUND: John Ganiel reported to the Iowa Birding Club that he and late Wicks had found a Pacific loon and first year black-headed Kittiwake at this location the morning of the 15th. After some searching, I found the bird close to the west shore. It later was relocated in the middle of the lake. Since I had to be at the Iowa football game, the time I was able to watch this bird was limited, although I did have good views for five or more minutes.

DESCRIPTION: Size was difficult to judge, because there was nothing else with which to compare it. I felt that it seemed smaller than a common loon, and that its head and neck were less bulky than those of a common loon. The first feature that I did note was a very sharp delineation on the side of the neck between the very white foreneck and the dark hindneck. The bill was straight and dagger like, and was dark. Another feature was the dark back of the head and neck. Also, the back of the head and neck was not consistently dark. When the bird turned its head, and the light was right, it appeared to be light or even a silvery gray. I was in the Pacific NW just a month ago.

ADDITION TO DOCUMENTATION

SPECIES: PACIFIC LOON

On 15 and 16 November, I observed the Pacific Loon again. On the 15th, it was at mid-afternoon on an overcast day. On the 16th it was clear and early morning. The only features of this bird on which I could amplify after these additional observation times were: (1) The chinstrap was seen especially well on the 15th, and (2) The back appeared to be a uniform dark gray color, with no light barring or checking noted.

SIMILAR SPECIES: Common loon is larger with a proportionately larger head, neck, and bill. It also has a patterned side of neck where the dark of the hindneck is not so sharply delineated from the light of the foreneck. Common loon also has light around the eye, and does not exhibit a chinstrap. It also has some white patterning on the back.

DOCUMENTATION OF EXTRAORDINARY BIRD SIGHTING

Species: Pacific Loon. **Number:** 1

Location: Pleasant Creek State Park, Linn Co., IA

Date: 9 November 1991 (also 16 Nov) **Time:** 12:00 to 12:45 p.m.

Name and address: Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246

Others before/with/after: with Jim Fuller, found by Pete Wickham and John Daniel.

Habitat and circumstances: Deep artificial lake with many ducks.

Description of bird: A very sharply demarcated loon with white underparts and front and dark upperparts. Bird was 50% longer than Lesser Scaup that was next to it. Bill relatively thin and straight (pointed). Lower mandible gray-blue, upper mandible darker. White extended from just above bill, back and below eye with wider auricular area, and then straight down neck except for thin neck mark. Top of head and neck a soft gray-brown, darker on forehead. Back dark, not quite black and unmarked. Neck quite thick.

Voice: not heard.

Similar species: No Common Loons present for comparison, but several were seen earlier in day at Lake Macbride. Bill thinner and straighter than Common Loon. No white around eye. Very sharp demarcation down neck. Neck mark was very thin and faint to me.

Any one have reservations?: no.

Light: sun behind us **Distance:** 75 to 150 yards (est) **Optics:** 20x scope

Previous experience: Have seen one in Iowa (spring), many in fall on West Coast, and breeding birds at Churchill.

References before/after viewing: Looked at National Geographic Guide during observation.

Time of field notes: while viewing. **Final typing:** 2 hours.

DOCUMENTATION FORM

For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

91-26

What species? Pacific Loon (Winter) How many? 1

Location? Pleasant Creek State Park, Linn Co., SE bay of lake

Type of Habitat? Open water on man-made lake

When? date(s): 10Nov91 time: 10:15 to 10:30

Who? your name and address: David L. Dankert, 5600 Plainview Dr. NW, C.R., IA

Others with you: Jeffrey B. Dankert, John F. Daniel

Others before or after you: John F. Daniel

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, undertail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

The bird was located for us by John Daniel. The bird was feeding in open water near opposite shore. JFD described diagnostic characteristics of the bird, and these were immediately noted: evidence of a chin strap, and a sharp line of contrast between upper and lower regions of neck.

Similar species; how eliminated:

Common Loon (Winter) lacks the chin strap and the sharp contrast on the neck.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about the identification? NO

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), optical equipment.

100% overcast but clear; 150 yds (est.)
7 X 35 binoculars, 60 mm scope, zoom 15X-60X

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

Very little experience with winter loons.

References and persons consulted before writing description:

Eastern Birds, (Peterson), Birds of N.A., (Golden), John Daniel

How long before field notes made? 6 hr this form completed? 30Nov91

Send completed form to Field Reports or CBC editor (address on back cover of Iowa Bird Life).

DOCUMENTATION OF RARE SPECIES

PACIFIC LOON

Gavia pacifica

Date: 10 November 1991 Time: approx. noon

Location: Pleasant Creek Lake, Linn Co., Iowa

Description: Probably an adult in basic plumage, the same bird previously reported by many observers. Small loon, distinctly larger than but not dwarfing nearby Lesser Scaup (Aythya affinis). Very dark gray to black unpatterned dorsum, including hindneck and top half of head to just below the eye, sharply demarcated from white lower face and neck. Thin gray chin-strap at the point of flexure between vertical neck and horizontal head. Sides concolor with dorsum. Remainder of underparts white. Upperwing surface and tail entirely dark gray to black. Underwing surface and legs not seen well enough to comment. Dagger-like bill relatively short and thin, straight, grayish surrounded by black edging.

Behavior: On open lake, swimming and making occasional underwater dives. At one point it began to roll onto side and flap excitedly with one wing, darting quickly across the water surface. It reminded me of the feigned injury by mother birds defending their young. I actually thought it might be injured except that later it was observed taking off and flying low over the water surface.

Voice: None heard.

Conditions: Overcast, snowing. Windy, cold. Observed intermittently for about an hour from 100-200 meters with Zeiss 10x40 binoculars and Simmons 25x telescope.

Similar Species: Arctic Loon (Gavia arctica) indistinguishable from Pacific Loon but accidental in the lower 48. Common Loon (Gavia immer) much larger with proportionately longer, thicker bill, lacks chin-strap, shows more white around eye. Usually shows blotchy demarcation between dark hindneck and white foreneck. Red-throated Loon (Gavia stellata) with lighter, distinctly patterned back, little or no demarcation between dark hindneck and lighter foreneck, and recurved bill.

Previous Experience: One previous sighting of Pacific Loon at a great distance several years ago in Galveston, Texas. Very familiar with Common and Red-throated Loons.

--Randall Pinkston
526 Reno Street
Iowa City, IA 52245-3039
Ph. (319)351-0592

What species? Pacific Loon How many? 1
 Location? Pleasant Creek State Recreation Area - (Linn Co.)
 Type of habitat? small artificial lake
 When? date(s): Nov. 16, 1991 time: 3:00 p.m. to 3:40 p.m. (approximately)
 Who? your name and address: Mark Proescholdt, Box 65, Liscumb, Iowa 50148
 others with you: Beth Proescholdt, Pam and Reid Allen
 others before or after you: many, Armstrongs

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

The loon flew in and landed in with many ducks that Pam and Reid were watching. Reid came and notified Mom and me where we were ~~at~~ another part of the lake. This was a small loon with a small bill which was straight, narrow, and held horizontally. It was very white on the throat and front of the neck. It was very dark on the head, ^{back of} neck, and back with a sharp dividing line between the white and dark on the bird. It had a very definite black chinstrap on its white throat. It was dark around its eye area. It dove a bit while we watched but was up most of the time that I watched it.

Mom and I also saw it again on Nov. 20th.

Similar species and how eliminated: A Common Loon is larger, has a large bill, has a heavily patterned side of the neck, lacks a chinstrap. A Red-throated Loon has a pale face, a slender bill with an upturned lower mandible, and a neck lacking a strong light-dark pattern.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? NO

If yes, explain: :

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:
 Had great looks at it. Partly cloudy with sun at our sides. 70-100 yards away (estimated). 8x30 Binocs, 22x scope, Allen's Kowa scope.

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

Saw many Pacific Loons along Oregon Coast this summer; have seen many Common Loons and a few Red-throated

References and persons consulted before writing description:

Kenn Kaufman's Advanced Birding.

How long before field notes made? 10:00 p.m. this form completed? NOV. 19, 1991
that night

DOCUMENTATION FORM

Carl J. Bendorf
845 Cypress Court
Iowa City, IA 52245

Pacific Loon
November 19, 1991 approx. 1:00 to 1:30 p.m.
Pleasant Creek State Park, Linn County

While scoping a group of scaup (looking for a Surf Scoter), a bird swam across my 22X scope view. I recognized immediately that it was a winter plumage loon from the large, longish body (compared to the scaup), long neck, and straight dagger-type bill. I was also immediately struck by how the light and dark features of the bird contrasted so much.

Over the next few minutes, I made drew a rather bad sketch to remind myself of the following description:

The bird's back was nearly solid dark brown with very little or no flecking. The flanks were almost the same color but they had some lighter flecking with gave the impression of making the flanks a little lighter. The back of the neck all the way up the back of the head and down to the bill was solid, unmarked, chocolate brown (very dark). This dark extended down onto the cheeks of the head but was a little broken up around the eye. The eye appeared dark but it almost looked like there was a light eye ring.

Under the chin, down the front of the neck and onto the breast was very clean white. This white and the brown of the back of the neck was very cleanly and smoothly marked. There was a pale but very distinct "chinstrap" on the otherwise white throat. This chinstrap rose all the way up to meet the dark on the head behind the cheek.

At the front end of the dark flanks (as they faded into the white of the breast), there were perhaps 3-4 distinct vertical curving stripes. This was a vestige of the alternate plumage.

The bill was dark, perhaps gray-blue, and the bill was very straight. The neck seemed stocky and thick.

There was one Common Loon nearby and, in comparison, it was slightly larger, had a clearly checkered lighter back, and had a larger, lighter bill. It also had a head shape with a little bump on the forehead and on the back of the head. The Pacific Loon had a very smoothly rounded head shape.

In addition, the Common Loon head and neck coloration was much paler and had various indentations of the lighter front neck area into the darker side and hind neck area.

25-1P

91-26

Bendorf
Page 2

DOCUMENTATION FORM

The Pacific Loon swam rapidly and dove several times. It dove very delicately, sort of a combination diving and sinking action.

The sky was overcast but not hazy. It was one of those very quiet, gray days when details seem crystal clear. The bird was approximately 60-75 yards away and the viewing was excellent.

I have seen one alternate plumage Pacific Loon in Iowa and a number of alternate plumage birds in Alaska and basic plumage in California.

My crude field sketch is attached. I wrote this up within two hours of the observation.

