

Red-throated Loon

2 Sep 1972

Jester Park, Polk Co., IA

Stuart and Sue Burns

to 4 Sep, Am. Birds 27:67; Burns & Burns 1972, Brown 1971

Record Number: 81-LD

Classification: A-D

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 42:69; Am. Birds 27:67.

Burns, S., and S. Burns. 1972. Red-throated Loons at Jester Park, Des Moines. IBL 42:71-72.

VOTE (1981): 4-II, 3-III

III, one observation by 1 party of 2.

II, Confirmed by Brown; description adequate, habitat a little unusual.

Iowa Bird Life
Field Reports
42:69. 1972

Loons, Grebes, Pelicans. One Arctic Loon was still at the Reservoir near Des Moines on 3 June (DMo,WHB). Three Red-throated Loons were found at Jester Park on 2 September (SB) (see longer note). Two Western Grebes were seen on 12

Burns, S., and S. 1972.
Iowa Bird Life 42:71-72.

Red-throated Loons at Jester Park, Des Moines - Actually, Sue and I discovered the loons by accident while we were looking at a Green Heron. We were camped at Jester over the Labor Day weekend and I had seen the heron while I was hiking the road. Perhaps this would have been no big thrill to other bird watchers, but we've not had all that much luck with shore birds; and herons are fascinating to watch. Anyway, we drove to Toodam Pond, saw the heron, then turned our glasses on what we expected would be three "ducks" swimming amongst the lily pads and algae in the same area of the pond. One look and we both agreed that they were loons -- because of the shape of the heads and their mannerism of craning their necks and perring from side to side. We also watched them doing their half-summersault dive. Then we saw the red throats and the vertical stripes on the back of the head and made positive identification. There were three - two in summer plumage and the third with a very faint, if any, throat patch.

This was Saturday, Sep. 2, 1972. On Monday they were still there, although they had moved to another pond. We were excited because it was a new bird for our life list, but still didn't realize what a find we had made inasmuch as the migration

map in Robbins Birds of North America seemed to indicate that the red-throated was a regular migrant. But when we returned to town Monday afternoon I looked in Woodward Brown's Annotated List of the Birds of Iowa to discover it registered as "accidental," with "no recent records." We were certain we had identified them correctly, but the discovery seemed so extraordinary that we wanted someone to absolve us of the crime of creative bird-watching. I called Woody; he and his wife drove out that evening and confirmed the sighting. We were privately thankful that we hadn't sent them out on a wild loon chase.

This has been a rewarding summer for us. We've had a Carolina Wren nesting in our yard this summer and we're hoping we can tempt it to stay the winter as well. STUART & SUE BURNS, 5804 Ingersoll, Des Moines.

American Birds
27:67 1973

reported throughout the Region. Three Red-throated Loons, 2 with red throats, had arrived in Des Moines, Ia. by Sept. 2 (SB); one was present in the Mississippi R. St. Charles Co., Mo. in October (mob); 4 were found at L. Manawa (Council Bluffs), Ia. Oct. 23 (CKj, *vide* LP); another was observed at Hoover Reservoir,

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