

Records Committee, Iowa Ornithologists' Union

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Red-throated Loon

27 Nov 1996

Red Rock Reservoir, Marion Co., IA

\*Stephen J. Dinsmore

IBL 67:19, 81

Record Number: 96-39

Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATION

Stephen J. Dinsmore, 4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames 50014 [4/6/97]

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 67:19

Records Committee: IBL 67:81

VOTE: 7 A-D

A-D, Good description of a bird well seen.

A-D, Size, bill, and coloration are distinctive.

A-D, Size, bill shape and posture, facial pattern, and upper part coloration described under good viewing conditions.

## DOCUMENTATION FORM

Species: Red-throated Loon  
Number: 1 first-basic  
Location: Red Rock Reservoir, Marion Co., IA  
Habitat: large lake  
Date: 27 November 1996  
Time: 4:23-4:45 p.m.  
Observer: Stephen J. Dinsmore 4024 Arkansas Dr. Ames, IA 50014  
Others who saw bird: none

Description of bird(s): I was scanning the lake from the north side of the dam when I noticed a small loon floating in the water near the dam face. The bird was small with a long, thin neck and small head. I quickly recognized the bird as a Red-throated Loon. The bill was black, about the same length as the head, and appeared upturned because of a straight culmen and angled lower mandible. The head was held tilted upward. The forehead, crown, and back of the neck were light gray and contrasted sharply with the white foreneck. The face was mostly white, including the area around the eye. The remainder of the body was black except for some prominent lighter spotting on the mantle. I also noted that the back of the neck was lighter than the mantle. The lighter markings on the mantle indicate the bird was in first-basic plumage.

Similar species and how eliminated: The size and shape were clearly those of a loon. The combination of small size, thin, upturned bill, paler head, and speckled mantle eliminates other loon species.

Viewing conditions and equipment: Viewing conditions were excellent with overcast skies. Estimated viewing distance was 100-200m. I used a 20-60x spotting scope.

Previous experience with species: I have seen several other Red-throated Loons in Iowa, plus thousands off North Carolina and other Atlantic Coast states.

References consulted: NGS Field Guide to the Birds of North America

How long before field notes made: none written

How long before this form completed: written 28 November 1996