

Records Committee, Iowa Ornithologists' Union

Printed: 11/20/00

Red-throated Loon

11 Nov 1995

Pleasant Creek L., Linn Co., IA

*Thomas H. Kent

IBL 66:17, 95

Record Number: 95-28

Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATION

Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City 52242

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 66:17

Records Committee: IBL 66:95

VOTE: 7 A-D

95-28

DOCUMENTATION OF EXTRAORDINARY BIRD SIGHTING

Species: Red-throated Loon; **Number:** 1 basic

Location: Pleasant Creek L.

Date: 11 November 1995; **Time:** 10:05 to 10:30 a.m.

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

Others before/with/after: none

Habitat and circumstances: artificial, deep-water lake

Description of bird: I noticed a relatively small loon which carried its bill upturned at a 20 to 30 degree angle. The bird appeared about 25% longer than nearby (not in same field) White-winged Scoters. It had a slimmer look, especially in the head and neck, than Common Loons that I have seen in the last few days. The bill was about two-thirds the length of the head, relatively thin and with the lower mandible curved up to the point of the bill. The bill appeared medium gray. The underparts were white and the upper parts gray. There was a relatively sharp contrast vertically on the neck between the white and gray. The white of the face extended back to the auricular area and included the eye. The top of the head and the neck were light gray, lighter and plainer than the back. The back had fine white speckling. The bird was swimming and dove occasionally.

Voice: not heard

Similar species: The size of the bird, shape of the bill, and contrast between light and dark argued against Common Loon. Pacific Loon would have a straight bill and darker top of head and back of neck. I did not see any chin strap, but this would have been difficult to see. The fact that I saw the eye in the white area appears to exclude Pacific Loon. The upper parts were lighter than in the two Pacific Loons that I saw this fall. The relatively white fore-neck and face suggests an adult.

Any one have reservations?: NA

Light: cloudy, windy; **Distance:** 300 yards (guess); **Optics:** 20x scope.

Previous experience: I have seen several in Iowa and many on coasts.

References before/after viewing: None before. Looked at Advanced Birding and National Geographic Guide while typing similar species.

Time of notes: during viewing period; **Final typing:** 2 days.