

Pacific Loon  
5 Nov 1989  
IPL Ponds, Pottawatamie Co., IA  
Silcock  
IBL 60:11, 61:84

Record Number: 89-24  
Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATION

Ross Silcock

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 60:11  
Records Committee: IBL 61:84

VOTE: 6 A-D, 1 abstain

A-D: Size should be smaller than nearby Double-crested Cormorants. Description is adequate but could have been more detailed for 30 minute observation. Presence of chinstrap and sharp demarcation between light and dark on neck is helpful.

A-D: Dark around eye, clear demarcation between light and dark of neck, and chinstrap seem to confirm identification. Thirty minutes of observation should have produced more detail. Notes made at time of observation would have strengthened this documentation.

A-D: The strong demarcation on the head is diagnostic.

A-D: Everything in documentation is consistent with this species except size comparison to D.C. Cormorant. This size is more consistent with Common Loon. This could be a function of distance and/or light. Preponderance of evidence is for Pacific Loon, I believe beyond doubt.

A-D: Good field marks observed.

DOCUMENTATION FORM  
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

89-24

What species? PACIFIC LOON How many? 1

Location? IPL SOUTH POND, POTTAWATTOMIE CO, IA

Type of Habitat? ARTIFICIAL IMPOUNDMENT

When? date(s): NOV 5, 1989 time: 11<sup>45</sup> to 12<sup>15</sup> (EST)

Who? your name and address: ROSS SILCOCK

Others with you: B.J. ROSE, DON ROSE, ~~ROGER ROSE~~, ROGER ROSE, PETER WICKHAM, OTHERS

Others before or after you: ?

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.

TYPICAL LOON - DARK ABOVE, WHITE BELOW, DAGGER-LIKE BILL, NO TAIL.  
ABOUT ~~THE~~ SIZE OF <sup>D-C</sup> CORMORANTS NEARBY. ACTIVELY DIVING, SPENDING MOST TIME UNDERWATER UNTIL FINALLY BEGAN PREENING. BILL WAS STRAIGHT, CARRIED LEVEL WHEN RESTING, DIFFICULT TO DISCERN COLOR DUE TO REFLECTION OF LIGHT. CROWN DARK, AS WAS BACK. NOTICEABLE CHINSTRAP CLEARLY SEEN. DARK OF CROWN & HINDNECK ~~TO~~ DOWN PAST EYE (i.e. EYE SURROUNDED BY BLACKISH FEATHERING). STRONG DARK-LIGHT CONTRAST BETWEEN UPPER & UNDERPARTS WITH CLEAN CUT DEMARCATION IN HEAD & NECK AREA.

Similar species; how eliminated: COMMON LOON - CLEAN CUT BLACK-WHITE DEMARCATION AND EYE SURROUNDED BY DARK FEATHERING; CHINSTRAP.

RED-THROATED LOON - DARK FEATHERING (NOT GREYISH AS IN MOST RED-THROATS) BILL HELD LEVEL - SYMMETRICAL DAGGER-LIKE BILL, CHINSTRAP.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about the identification? NO  
If yes, explain: B.J. DISCOVERED THE PACIFIC - HE SAW TWO EARLIER, BUT I DIDN'T SEE THE SECOND BIRD WELL ENOUGH TO ~~DO~~ IDENTIFY.

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), optical equipment.  
GOOD. A LITTLE WINDY (30-40 MPH) BUT LIGHT GOOD. (DIFFUSE).

TRIPOD / 25X BALSAP, 10X50 BINOCS - DISTANCE EST 250 YARDS.

Previous experience with species and similar ones:  
HAVE SEEN PACIFIC IN NEBRASKA ~~AND PENNSYLVANIA~~ (VERY CLOSE VIEWS)  
RED-THROATED IN N. CAROLINA & PENNSYLVANIA.

References and persons consulted before writing description:  
NONE

How long before field notes made? SAME EVENING this form completed? 1 WEEK

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