

Pacific Loon
26 Nov 1899
near Sabula, Jackson Co., IA
Giddings
Giddings 1900, Anderson 1907, DuMont 1933

Record Number: 93-AC
Classification: NA

REFERENCES

Giddings, H.J. 1900. [title?]. West. Orn. 5(3):60. [reference quoted by Anderson]

Anderson 1907

Hersey, F.S. 1917. The status of the Black-throated Loon (*Gavia arctica*) as a North American bird. Auk 34:383-290.

DuMont 1933

LETTER

Ronald E. Goetz, Comments on Iowa Loons, 28 March 1988

VOTE: 5 NA

NA, No evidence is extant. From the experience with the previous specimen (93-AA), one might suspect that Giddings was correct./thk

Anderson 1907
pp 151-152

7. (9). *Gavia arctica* (Linn.). Black-throated Loon.

The Black-throated Loon is a northern species which very casually visits Iowa. Two specimens have been taken in Jackson county. J. Giddings reports (Iowa Orn., ii, 4, 1896, 73): "Nov. 15, 1895, a male Black-throated Loon was shot while swimming in the Mississippi River a little way from the shore opposite Sabula, by Mr. W. Eldridge. Identified by Dr. C. Hart Merriam." H. J. Giddings reports (West. Orn., v, 3, 1900, 60): "On Nov. 26, 1899, an immature male was shot on the Mississippi River at this place [Sabula] and sent to me for mounting." A specimen in the University Museum, No. 10175, in juvenile plumage, was taken at Burlington; recorded by Prof. C. C. Nutting (Proc. Iowa Acad. Sci., 1894, 44).

2

]

!

Hersey, F. S. 1917.
The status of the
Black-throated Loon
(*Gavia arctica*) as a
North American bird.
Auk 34: 233-290.
(p. 288)

Iowa: Dr. R. M. Anderson records (Proc. Davenport Acad. Sci., Vol. XI) three specimens of this loon from Iowa. One was, at that time, in the collection of the State University at Iowa City (No. 10175). Regarding this bird Prof. Dayton Stoner writes, "I am sorry to report that I am unable to find any specimen of *Gavia arctica* in our collections." The two remaining records are of birds reported by Mr. H. J. Giddings. One of these is said to have been identified by Dr. C. Hart Merriam and is still in Mr. Giddings' possession. Dr. Merriam has written us that he does not now recall this bird but a memorandum he has, which was made in connection with the examination of this specimen, states that all United States records are *pacifica*. Mr. Giddings states in a recent letter that the bill of this bird measures 2.15 inches from which it seems evident that it is a Pacific Loon.

In a recent letter Dr. Anderson says, "I have no doubt personally that either *Gavia arctica* or *Gavia pacifica* occurs occasionally as stragglers or accidentally in Iowa. From what I have learned in the last few years, however, I am inclined to think the bird would be *pacifica*."

Gavia arctica pacifica (Lawrence). Pacific Loon

Accidental. This species was listed by Anderson (1907) under the name *Gavia arctica* (Linn.), Black-throated Loon. He included the following records: "Two specimens have been taken in Jackson County. J. Giddings reports (Iowa Orn., ii, 4, 1896, 73): 'Nov. 15, 1895, a male Black-throated Loon was shot while swimming in the Mississippi River a little way from the shore opposite Sabula, by Mr. W. Eldridge. Identified by Dr. C. Hart Merriam.' H. J. Giddings reports (West. Orn., v. 3, 1900, 60): 'On Nov. 26, 1899, an immature male was shot on the Mississippi River at this place [Sabula] and sent to me for mounting.' A specimen in the University Museum, No. 10175, in juvenal plumage, was taken at Burlington; recorded by Prof. C. C. Nutting (Proc. Iowa Acad. Sci., 1894, 44)."

Subsequently, F. Seymour Hersey, while engaged in a critical review of all North American records of the Black-throated Loon, recorded (Auk, XXXIV, pp. 283-290) that his correspondence in connection with his investigation revealed that the specimen in the University of Iowa Museum could not be found. H. J. Giddings wrote him that the specimen secured November 16, 1895, was still in his possession and that the exposed culmen measured 2.15 inches, from which Hersey concluded it must be a Pacific Loon.

This mounted specimen was examined by the writer (Wilson Bull., XLV, pp. 89-90) on April 15, 1933, and found to be, unquestionably, referable to *Gavia arctica*. All North American records of this species south of Alaska are now referred to the subspecies *pacifica*. Measurements in millimeters of this male in winter plumage are: wing, 303.5; tail, 57.9; tarsus, 68.5; exposed culmen, 51.3; height of culmen at base, 13.7; height of culmen at nostril, 12.2; culmen from nostril, 38.8. It was shot by W. H. Eldredge on November 16, 1895, while it was swimming in the Mississippi River in front of the town of Sabula, Jackson County. This statement is slightly different than the one quoted by Anderson. However, these data have been recently verified by Giddings through reference to his journals. There are no other definite Iowa records.

1933
DuMont ~~1934~~
pp 16-17

Goetz 28 Mar 1988

93-AC

Comments on Iowa Loon Records

I. Pacific/Arctic Loons

1. Specimen UI 10175. As indicated in previous correspondence, this specimen is a juvenile Red-throated Loon.

2. 15 (or 16) Nov 1895. Mississippi R. near Sabula, Clinton Co. J.Giddings, W.Eldridge, C.Hart Merriam. (Giddings 1986; Anderson 1907; Hersey 1917; DuMont 1933; DuMont 1934).

I am not certain yet that the measurements given eliminate arctica completely. However, the bird was at least not a Common or Red-throated Loon. Apparently the plumage characters which can support separation of pacifica from arctica were unknown until very recently and in any case were not described here. This was a young bird, since feathers of upperparts were margined with grayish. I may be able to say more about this bird after I do some research on measurements. Any chance that the specimen still exists?

3. 26 Nov 1899. Mississippi R. near Sabula, Clinton Co. H.J.Giddings. (Anderson 1907).

Almost no detail.

4. Dec 1902. Polk Co. Lester P. Fagan. (DuMont 1931).

No details provided to make judgement from.

5. 8 Dec 1948. Glendale Cemetary, Des Moines, Polk Co. Jack Musgrove. (Musgrove 1949).

Does the State Historical Museum still have this specimen? He says the bird was in immature plumage, but this is not consistent with his description. He states that the back is black with no spotting except on the wings and scapulars. Immature loons of all species except Red-throated have conspicuous wide gray margins to the feathers of the entire upperparts. Hence this bird must be an adult Common or Pacific (or conceivably Arctic) Loon. He also says that there was a distinct brownish-gray band across the throat. Does he mean across the base of the throat (in which case adult Pacific is far less likely than adult Common) or across the top of the throat (i.e., a chinstrap, in which case the bird was a Pacific)? Since size is not described, I would recommend treating the record as hypothetical unless the specimen can be located.

6. 11-12 Dec 1948. Des Moines Res., Polk Co. Berkowitz, Musgrove, Peasley, Stiles. (Berkowitz 1949).

Clearly a diagnostically described Pacific/Arctic Loon, yet it seems quite exceptional that it was in full Definitive Alternate plumage so late. I have data from only three specimens of fall adult Pacific: The Missouri specimen, taken 23 Oct, was in almost complete Definitive Alternate, but shows white feathers molting into the auricular region, the chin, and the throat; one of the Field Museum specimens, taken 16 Nov, was in Definitive Basic except that it showed remnants of the black throat patch and a few of the white squares left on the mantle; and another specimen taken 20 Dec was in Definitive Basic except that it still had a few of the scapular squares (less than the 16 Nov specimen). In addition, I have