

Records Committee, Iowa Ornithologists' Union

Printed: 11/20/00

Red-throated Loon

29 Oct 1995

Saylorville Res., Polk Co., IA

\*Stephen J. Dinsmore

IBL 66:17, 95

Record Number: 95-27

Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATION

Stephen J. Dinsmore, 4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames 50014 [3/24/96]

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 66:17

Records Committee: IBL 66:95

VOTE: 7 A-D

A-D, Description eliminates poss. of small Common Loon.

95-27

DOCUMENTATION FORM

Species: Red-throated Loon  
Number: 1 juvenile/first-basic  
Location: Saylorville Res., Polk Co.  
Habitat: large lake  
Date: 29 October 1995  
Time: 3:55-4:50 p.m.  
Observer: Stephen J. Dinsmore 4024 Arkansas Dr. Ames, IA 50014  
Others who saw bird: Denny Thompson

Description of bird(s): I was scanning the lake from Cherry Glen when I noticed a group of six loons in the middle of the lake. Five were Commons, and the sixth was clearly smaller and more slender. After a few seconds, I concluded the bird was a Red-throated Loon. The bird was slightly smaller than a Common Loon with a much slimmer neck and body and a smaller head. The bill was black, short, and appeared upturned because of the straight culmen. The bird also held its head tilted upward. The foreneck was white and the back of the neck was pale gray. There was no sharp contrast between the dark and light color on the neck. There was also some pale gray wash on the shoulders, and what appeared to be a couple of gray streaks along the sides of the lower neck. The face was very pale (white), and this pale color surrounded the eye. The remainder of the upperparts and wings appeared black. The face and neck patterns are consistent with a Red-throated Loon in juvenile/first-basic plumage.

Similar species and how eliminated: The smaller size, slimmer appearance, and bill size and shape eliminate other loon species, especially Pacific and Common.

Viewing conditions and equipment: Viewing conditions were good with an overcast sky. Estimated viewing distance was 400-500m. I used a 20-60x spotting scope.

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

References consulted: none

How long before field notes made: none made  
How long before this form completed: written 29 October 1995