

Pacific Loon
11 Nov 1970
Des Moines reservoir, Polk Co., IA
W. H. Brown
AB 25:65

Record Number: 93-AJ
Classification: NA

REFERENCE

Field Reports: AB 25:65
[not mentioned in IBL or Brown 1971]

LETTER

Ronald E. Goetz, Comments of Iowa Loon Records, 28 March 1988

VOTE: 5 NA

NA, No evidence. Brown apparently sent this record to the seasonal editor of American Birds but did not include it in his treatise on Iowa birds or in his Field Reports in IBL. /thk

93-AJ

American Birds 25:65
1971

LOONS, GREBS, EGRETS, IBIS — Single Arctic
Loons were seen on Nov. 8 through 29 at the
Mehldahl Dam area near Cincinnati (WR, HH
vide AJW) and on Nov. 11 at the Des Moines
Reservoir, Iowa (WHB). Red-throated Loons

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descriptions of three Missouri and Illinois sight records from Nov of adults, all of which were apparently entirely in Definitive Basic. In general, the retention of some Alternate scapular feathers into winter (in addition to the always retained Alternate wing coverts) is not exceptional (see Palmer, Handbook of North American Birds, Volume 1), but I found no indication that full Definitive Alternate was ever retained so late. I suppose, however, that with so many observers there is no chance of error?

7. Winter 1951-2. Mississippi R., Scott Co. A.W.Housman. (Baily 1954).

Any chance that the specimen still exists? (Davenport Museum?). No information given to allow judgement.

8. 6-11 (or 20) Jun 1964. Des Moines Res., Polk Co. A.Berkowitz, W.H.Brown. (Brown 1964, Audubon Field Notes 1964).

No details.

9. 22 Oct 1965. Des Moines Res., Polk Co. W.H.Brown. (Brown 1971).

No details.

10. 11 Nov 1970. Des Moines Res., Polk Co. W.H.Brown. (AB 1971).

No details.

11. 6 May--3 Jun 1972. Des Moines Res.-Moffitt L., Polk Co. D.Mooney, W.H.Brown. (Iowa Bird Life 42:37 & 69).

No details.

12. (1981-02) 28-29 Apr 1981. Amana L., Iowa Co. C.Bendorf*, M.Newlon*, T.Kent*, Shires. (Bendorf, 1981).

Fine details of a Definitive Alternate Pacific/Arctic Loon. Bendorf mentions black sides and back of bird (presumably he would have noticed white sides and flank patch), and Kent describes the back of head and neck as light fluffy gray. These points favor Pacific Loon so heavily as to essentially preclude any thought of Arctic Loon.

13. (1985-13) 13 Oct 85. Saylorville Res., Polk Co. B.Engebretsen*. (IBL 56:44).

Not much detail for a fall bird. Identification seemingly based only on bill shape and size, but no Common Loons seen in juxtaposition?

14. (1986-07) 1 Nov 86. Saylorville Res., Polk Co. S.Dinsmore*. (Dinsmore 1987).

Reported as Winter Adult. There are some points that I do not care for here. First, the back is described as medium gray, slightly lighter than a Common Loon. This makes it certain that the bird was not an adult Pacific, which have very dark backs. It does not even sound good for juvenile Pacific, which are still at least as dark as juvenile Common. Second, the crown and nape are described as light gray, lighter than the back. Adults in basic plumage usually have napes slightly paler than back,