

Red-throated Loon

8 Nov 1990

Saylorville Res., Polk Co., IA

S. Dinsmore

IBL 60:11, 61:84

Record Number: 89-22

Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATION

Steve Dinsmore

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 60:11

Records Committee: IBL 61:84

VOTE: 7 A-D

A-D: Adequate description.

A-D: Despite, according to my info., the fact that this species should have a spotted back (both in adult winter and juvenile plumage), all other observations supported identification, including bill description, mantle color, and perceptions of size and shape of head and neck.

A-D: Good documentation description agrees with Red-throated Loon.

A-D: Good description of the loon.

A-D: Good description.

## DOCUMENTATION FORM

Species?Red-throated Loon

How Many?1 winter adult

Location?Saylorville Reservoir, Polk Co.-off Cherry Glen Rec. Area

Habitat?large reservoir

Date?8 Nov 1989

Time?4:02-4:40 p.m.

Observers Name and address:Steve Dinsmore 4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames

Others who saw bird:none

Description of bird: As I was scanning the lake from Cherry Glen, I noticed what appeared to be a small loon swimming off the jetty near the boat landing. The size, slim posture with extended neck, bill shape, and gray and white plumage easily identified the bird as a loon. There were no other loons near the bird, so it was just my general impression that this loon was smaller than a Common Loon. Two other features of this bird really stuck out; the very small head and the bill shape. The bird had a long, slim neck like a cormorant. The head was very small, no larger than the diameter of the neck. The head was held at an upward angle throughout my observation. The bill was very needlelike with the lower mandible curving upwards towards the tip, giving the bill an upturned appearance. The bill seemed much smaller than the bill of a Common Loon and appeared dark colored. The foreneck and breast were white. The back of the neck, head, wings, and upperparts were light gray. I saw no lighter speckling on the back, leading me to believe that the bird was a winter adult.

Similar species and how eliminated:The small size, head posture, small head, and short, thin, upturned bill eliminates other loons.

Viewing conditions and equipment:Viewing conditions were good with the sun to one side and a cloudy sky. Estimated viewing distance was 200 yards. I used a Bushnell 20-45x spotting scope.

Previous experience with species:I have seen several Red-throated Loons in Iowa and hundreds in Massachusetts. I am also familiar with both Common and Pacific loons.

References consulted:NGS Field Guide to the Birds of North America

How long before field notes were made?while watching bird

How long before this form was completed?3 hours