

Neotropic Cormorant
10 May 1997
Riverton Area, Fremont Co., IA
*B. J. Rose/Doug Rose/Roger Rose
IBL 68:86

Record Number: 97-51
Classification: NA

DOCUMENTATION

Doug Rose [by inference, no address given]

REFERENCES

Field Reports: none

Records Committee: IBL 68:86

VOTE: 6 NA, 1 A-D

NA, There are not enough details given to identify this extremely rare vagrant. The size of the bird is described as "about 1/3 the size of the rest", but Neotropic Cormorant would be at least 2/3 the size of Double-crested Cormorant. There is no discussion of the extent of the throat pouch (which presumably was not visible) or the relative length of the tail.

NA, Probably was a Neotropic, but without more complete description of the neck and flight, I can't support it. Described as 1/3 the size of other cormorants--is this a typo?

NA, Probably a correct ID, but not enough detail for a bird that is presumably expanding but does not yet have much history in the state. 1/3 the size is a bit puzzling--that's pretty small. Head to tail ratio would have cinched this one for me.

NA, Documenters I'm sure meant 1/3rd smaller than the rest, not 1/3rd the size of the rest. No other details (such as tail length) were noted. It is unclear whether any notes supporting a second state record were taken at the time of the sighting. Please re-submit this record with a little more information.

NA, Size only feature noted. But did they mean 2/3 the size?

NA, On a rare species such as this in Iowa more details are needed to say beyond a reasonable doubt that this was a Neotropic Cormorant. Smaller size (1/3 smaller than Double-crested) and completely dark are suggestive but not without doubt. From 50 yards the bare parts of the face should have been visible as well as relative length of the tail to rest of bird. Did this bird in flight have or did it lack a kinked neck. More is needed to accept this record at this time.

A-D, Although description minimal, small size and dark plumage indicative of Neo. Corm. Experienced observers. Bird was probably 1/3 smaller than DC Corms, not 1/3 the size? Timing and association with DC Corms (late migrants) also suggestive of Neo Corm.

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Details of * Birds Fremont County Iowa

White Fronted Goose - Did not look too healthy but did have pink bill with a white face - north of P.Y.O. Orchard in newly created basin.

Peregrin Falcon - A very pale bird, probably a young male, dark hood. We watched this bird at Riverton for about 45 minutes as it made several passes at the waterfowl then sit in a tree for awhile and more passes at waterfowl. It never did make a kill while we were watching.

Piping Plover - Again at Riverton, very pale, with Semi-palmated Plovers for comparison, single black breast band, yellow legs, yellowish bill.

Ruddy Turnstone - Riverton again, hard to mistake with the black markings on the head and breast.

Sanderling - North of Hwy #2 on L-31 - In flooded field with Semi-palmated sandpipers, larger size, pale in comparison.

Western Sandpiper - Riverton again - with Semi-palmated sandpipers, bill longer with definite droop, back and crown reddish.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper - In a plowed field west of L-31 - buffy overall, white wing linings very distinct in flight.

Short-billed Dowitcher - Riverton again - "check" marks on flanks, not barring.

Great-tailed Grackle - Throughout the Missouri River flood plane - Males large with enormous tails, females light brown with pale eyes. This is becoming a common bird in southwest Iowa, can be found year around in Mills And Fremont counties.

Wimbrel - North of Hwy #2, Nebraska City area, in flooded field - Large shorebird with long down curved bill, striped head. We viewed this bird for about 5 minutes in full sunlight with Kiowa and Discoverer scopes. No question about identification.

Olivaceous Cormorant - Riverton - We walked out on the dike from the check station and spent a lot of time scoping the area. Around 7 p.m., a flock of 9 cormorants took off and were flying around the area. One cormorant appeared to be about 1/3 the size of the rest and completely dark, (the other cormorants were mostly immature double crests). I asked Dad and Roger if anything looked different about this flock of cormorants, and they both immediatly noticed the the small bird and said Olivaceous (actually Roger said Neotropic). The small size of this bird made it stand out. The flock flew within 50 yards of us then turned and headed north. The size difference was very noticable without binoculars.

Observers for all of the above: B.J.Rose, Doug Rose, Roger Rose.