

feather drying could al

Records Committee, Iowa Ornithologists' Union

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Anhinga

16 May 1995

Little Sioux R. near Turin, Monona Co., IA

*Liesl Kelly

IBL 66:97

Record Number: 95-04

Classification: NA

DOCUMENTATION

Liesl Kelly, 219 Chamberlain Place, Ames 50014 [8/13/95]

Laura M. Myers, 3203 West St. Apt 1, Ames 50014 [8/13/95]

REFERENCES

Field Reports: none

Records Committee: IBL 66:97

VOTE: 7 NA

NA, A tough one; some portions of the description such as the pointed bill and straight neck in flight favor Anhinga over Double-crested Cormorant. However, I am troubled by the description of a "gray-brown" back "with no distinct markings." White on the inner wing should have been visible when the bird was drying its wings. Habitat and date are appropriate. I could be persuaded on this one.

NA, I am not convinced that D-C Cormorant is eliminated because 1) the body color (slate) doesn't fit the Anhinga's glossy black body, and 2) no white markings on the back were mentioned. The habitat and mannerisms are also right for D-C Cormorant.

NA, Some parts of these descriptions are highly suggestive, especially the bill. Behavior of spreading the wings to dry fits either Anhinga or cormorant. The vagrancy patterns in the spring of '95 also add some credence to the report. The body descriptions, however, make me hesitate on this one. One report relates that the throat, breast and belly were not well seen which leads me to believe this bird was observed from the rear. One document describes the color as slate and the other as gray-brown with no distinct markings. I believe that were this an Anhinga, the white streaks and spots on the wings and upper back would have been evident from the perch and in flight.

NA, The only field mark favoring Anhinga over Double-crested Cormorant is the pointed bill. Kelly's drawing shows a short tail that is inconsistent with Anhinga. Neither observer noted white in wings or back, and Myers did not see the throat or breast, so she must have seen the back. Kelly's drawing looks like a frontal view and must be because only the front would be slate colored in either species. Anhingas have a sharp cutoff between the upper breast/neck and the lower belly (females and immatures). Kelly says Myers was at 10 meters with binocular; Myers says 10 meters with naked eye. The short-tailed, slate-colored front, and lack of white patches in the wings make this an immature Double-crested Cormorant. The yellow-orange bill could be partly throat pouch and the bill could look pointed with the naked eye. Myers has seen only 5-10 cormorants in the wild. More experienced observers have misjudged an immature cormorant as an Anhinga!

NA, The descriptions of the bird in both documentations do not rule out an immature Double-crested Cormorant. Behavior of

feather drying could also be that of Double-crested Cormorant. No description of the diagnostic wing pattern of Anhinga is given either.

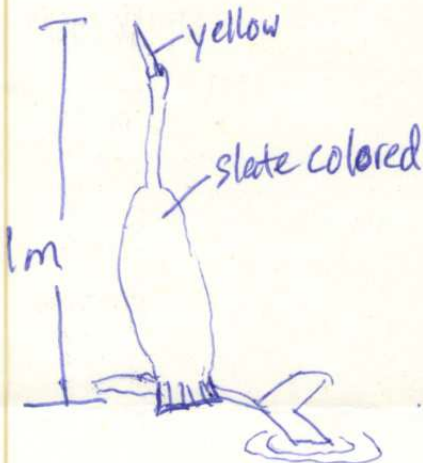
NA, Details not seen consistent with Anhinga include long tail, white pattern on back and wings (if adult as indicated by Myers [body colored slate])

NA, Lacking detail on plumage, but 'pointed' orange bill and straight neck in flight interesting. No comment on possibility of Neotropic Cormorant, whose similar bill might appear pointed. No comment on tail length. Cormorants of course also fan wings.

What species? *Ardea herodias* How many? 1Location? 084 N 044 W 08Type of habitat? closed channel of Little Sioux, surrounded by 10m wideWhen? date(s): T 16 May 1995 time: ? 14:30 to 14:35 area of trees; water with snagsWho? your name and address: Liesl Kelly 124 Science II Dept of Animal Ecologyothers with you: Laura Meyers ISU Ames, IAothers before or after you: unknown

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

Bird stood approximately 20m from the dirt road in NW corner of section 8, perched on a snag in the middle of the channel. I saw a yellow, sharp, long pointed (not blunt) beak, which the bird pointed upwards while perched. The rest of the body was colored slate. The bird then flew further south (about 30m) away from the road. We pulled into a private drive to get a better look at the bird. Laura looked with binoculars. I could see (without magnification) that the bird was holding its wings out to dry in a fan shape, characteristic of ardeas. I was now about 15m away.

Similar species and how eliminated: other colored heron species were possible but the bird sighted hadDid any one disagree or have reservations about identification? yesIf yes, explain: At a distance, I first thought I saw a heron other than the Great Blue (due to unusual coloration). Up close I was convincedViewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: it was an Ardeaexcellent lighting (mid-afternoon) 0.2 mi (truck odometer)Previous experience with species and similar ones: Myers with binocularsReferences and persons consulted before writing description: Natl. Geog. Field Guide to NAHow long before field notes made? 10 days this form completed? 10 days Birds

MAIL TO: T. H. Kent, Field Reports Editor, 211 Richards Street, Iowa City IA 52240

92-04

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Amphispiza bilineata
 Location? CRN Channel of
 Type of habitat? Channel of Little Sioux - surrounded by 10m wide
 When date(s): 1 to May 1985 time: 14:30 to 14:35
 Who/your name and address: Liesl Kelly 154 Spawell Dept of Animal Ecology
 Others with you: Tom Meyer
 Others before or after you: unknown

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

Bird stood approximately 20m from the dirt road in NW corner of section 8, perched on a snag in the middle of the channel. I saw a yellow, sharp, long pointed (not blunt) beak which the bird pointed upwards while perched. The rest of the body was colored slate. The bird then flew further south (about 30m) away from the road. The yellow into a private drive to get a better look at the bird. I saw looked with binoculars. I could see (without magnification) that the bird was holding its wings out to dry in a fan shape, characteristic of Amphispiza. I was very



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What species? Anhinga anhinga How many? 1
 Location? Monona Co. 84N044W09, intersection of the old Little Sioux R. and a dirt road that meets L12
 Type of habitat? freshwater river/creek on a log
 When? date(s): 5-16-95 time: between 3 to 5 pm
 Who? your name and address: Laura M. Myers 3203 West St. Apt. 1 Ames, IA 50014
 others with you: Liesl Kelly
 others before or after you: _____

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

About 2.5 ft tall with a 2 to 3 ft. wingspan. Had a heron-like or cormorant-like body shape. Had a straight heron-like bill, ending in a sharp tip. Bill was orange in color. Plumage was gray-brown with no distinct markings. Did not get a good view of throat, breast, or belly. It was perched near the road. When we turned into a lane parallel to the road it flew off. As we went down the lane we saw it perch on a dead log in the same creek. It had hit the water ^{with its wingtips} when it first flew. It was hanging its wings out from its body at this second perch as if drying or warming its wings. I got out of the truck to take a better look. It flew away. As it flew, it held its neck out straight (gooselike) instead of as a heron would (with a curve in it).

Similar species and how eliminated: Double-crested cormorant - the individual above didn't have a curved tip to the end of its bill.
Great Blue Heron - the individual above didn't have proper plumage patterns or flight patterns to be a GBH.
 Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? yes

If yes, explain: a Double-crested cormorant was seen a week later about 10 miles from the above location and it is suspected we'll misidentified it.
 Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: Sunny to partly cloudy, 70-80°, naked eye, approx. 10 meters, is the greatest distance (we've been doing 10 x 10m transects this summer).
 Previous experience with species and similar ones: I have never seen a live Anhinga before. I have seen a Double-crested cormorant 5-10 times in the wild.
 References and persons consulted before writing description: Dr. Dinsmore, Liesl Kelly

How long before field notes made? 1 week this form completed? 3 to 3 1/2 wks

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