

Anhinga
18 Oct 1953
near Riverton, Fremont Co., IA
Mrs. W. H. Collins
to 31 Oct; Collins 1953

Record Number: 81-AE
Classification: A-D

REFERENCE

Collins, Mrs. W.H. 1953. A sight record of the Anhinga in Fremont County. IBL 23:72.

VOTE (1981): 2 II, 5 III

III, Excellent account. Should have been documented by others.

II, Multiple observations by 4 observers. Sufficient detail to separate it from cormorant.

III, Good description, albeit minimal; no confirmation.

III, Good description - distinctive bird.

III, Bird seen by several observers on more than one occasion.

Description seems OK for a male Anhinga. Quite plausible.

III, Although not sufficiently documented for II by separate description, the Braleys are very reliable observers. Also observed over a period of time?.

81-AE

Collins, Mrs. W. H. 1953. A sight record of the Anhinga in Fremont County.
IBL 23:72.

A Sight Record of the Anhinga in Fremont County.—On October 18, 1953, an Anhinga was seen at a small impounding reservoir near Riverton, approximately 3 miles southeast of the intersection of Highways U.S. 275 and Iowa 2 (west of the town of Riverton and west of Nishnabotna River on Highway 42, then south approximately 1½ miles). The bird was seen sitting on a snag on the bank of the reservoir, preening itself and allowing careful study. It was a very dark bird, length about 3 feet, with very long, serpentine neck; head and neck plain dusky brown; wings banded and spotted with gray, long and pointed; back and long, fan-like tail, plain black, tail edged with white; short legs. We were fascinated by the unusual movement of the neck. Mr. Collins and I, with our seven-year-old daughter, Nancy, spotted the rare visitor on October 18. Next day, October 19, Mrs. Robert Bordner and daughter, Mrs. F. M. Braley, of Shenandoah, saw the bird at the same location and verified our identification. They reported seeing the Water Turkey dive and swim with only the head and neck showing; they also heard its call, which was not unlike the grunt of a pig. 2

We made several trips to see the Anhinga between the date that we first saw it, October 18, and October 31. We were able to observe the bird for long periods; it accommodated us by sitting still and giving us the "eye", while it croaked or moaned from time to time—whatever the mumbling of its notes could be called. We saw it fly, dive into the water, disappear from view, to come up on the opposite shore and climb out of the water on a partly submerged limb; then fly to a bare branch in the center of the pond and preen vigorously, with the large black wings fully extended and back exposed to the sun. We also got a good view of the webbed feet. It would make its call when alarmed or even slightly disturbed—repeated it several times then relaxed. It doubled its neck in an S-shape, with head and foreneck resting on the lower S-curve. It could turn its head in any direction with no effort. One Sunday we watched the bird undisturbed for about 1½ hours. The coloring on the wings with grayish-white patches was really quite attractive.

The reservoir where the Anhinga was found has been stocked with fish by the owners of the adjacent land, which is posted. The dam has raised the water level, engulfing and drowning large trees along the two original shore lines. This created a small area with an environment of dead trees akin to the more natural swamp areas.—MRS. WILLIAM H. COLLINS, Shenandoah, Iowa.