

Brown Pelican

6 May 1992

De Soto N.W.R., Harrison Co., IA

\*B.J. Rose, \*Kent, \*Fuller, \*Petersen

AB 46:444, IBL 62:74, 63:69

Record Number: 92-10

Classification: A-P

DOCUMENTATIONS

B. J. Rose (6 May), 14937 "N" St., Omaha, NE 68137 (6/30/93)

Thomas H. Kent (7 May), 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246

Jim Fuller (7 May), 6 Longview Knoll, NE, Iowa City, IA 52240

Peter C. Petersen (11 May), 235 McClellan Blvd, Davenport, IA

52803

PHOTOGRAPHS

B. J. Rose (6 May), P-0327 (NBR 60:69, AB 46:444)

Thomas H. Kent (7 May), P-0328

Peter C. Petersen, (11 May), P-0329

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 62:74

Records Committee: IBL 63:69

Photo: Am. Birds 46:444 (P-0327)

Green, R. C. 1992. Brown Pelican in Nebraska. Nebr. Bird Rev. 60:69 (P-0237)

VOTE: 7 A-P

A-P, Diagnostic photos of breeding plumage bird without buff on neck.

A-P, Excellent photographs! Good details for a Brown Pelican provided in documentations.

Table 2 (continued)

Species	Banner	Dundy	Thomas	York	Dixon	Cuming	Lancaster	Johnson	Washington	Douglas
Eastern Bluebird								N(6), E, Y(8)		
American Robin					N/A		NB, N		N/Y*	N/A(5), F, Y(9-10)
Gray Catbird					NB, N/A Y(3)					
Brown Thrasher										N/A*
Cedar Waxwing										N/A, Y(3)
European Starling							N/A			
Warbling Vireo										NB, N/A, F, Y(2)
Yellow Warbler					NB					
Common Yellowthroat					NB					
Blue Grosbeak			Y(1)*	E(3)*						
Dickcissel										
Chipping Sparrow									CF*	
Vesper Sparrow										
Lark Sparrow										
Red-winged Blackbird	Y(4), F	Y(3)								N/A, E(4), N/Y
Common Grackle										Y(2), F

Table 2 (concluded)

Species	Lancaster	Douglas
Orchard Oriole		NB, N/A, Y, F
Northern Oriole		Y(2), F
House Finch	CN	
Pine Siskin		NB, CN, N/A
American Goldfinch	N/A, Y(4)	

## NOTES ON BIRD SIGHTINGS

Brown Pelican in Nebraska. A BROWN PELICAN arrived at DeSoto Wildlife Refuge sometime during the last week of April, 1992, and was still there on May 8 with a flock of WHITE PELICANS. Brown Pelicans are extremely rare in Nebraska, so to have sightings in two consecutive years is very surprising. --Ruth C. Green, 506 W.31 Ave., Bellevue, NE 68005

Editor's Note: NBR Vol. 59 (3), 1991, p.93, had reports of two Brown Pelicans in May, 1991, one in Dodge Co. and the other in Dakota Co.



Photo by B. J. Rose at DeSoto WR, May 6, 1992

Longspurs, Black Scoters, and Cormorants. Just after the snowstorm on April 20-21, 1992, I saw LAPLAND LONGSPURS south of Bellevue, feeding on a wind-swept patch of ground. In their midst were two CHESTNUT-COLLARED LONGSPURS, which rarely migrate through eastern Nebraska.

On April 28, 1992, I saw two BLACK SCOTERS swimming on the Missouri River by Child's Hollow in Fontenelle Forest. I also saw DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS swimming on the Missouri, the first time for me to see them on a deep, swift-flowing river.

Banding Notes. I banded a WHITE-EYED VIREO in my yard on April 6, 1992. I believe this is the earliest record for Nebraska. I banded a female LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH in Fontenelle Forest on June 6, 1992. It had an active brood patch, and gave every indication of nesting. Another bird of this species was singing on territory in the area.

---Ruth C. Green, 506 W.31 Ave., Bellevue, NE 68005

Albino Birds. Several sightings of albino or partially albino birds have been reported during the past year. An albino AMERICAN ROBIN was discovered by Mark Brohman in the Maxwell Arboretum on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln East Campus July 6, 1991. He caught it so that Mabel Ott could band it, then released it at the same site. It was later found dead in the area.



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Brown Pelican 92-10 P-0328  
De Soto N.W.R., Harrison Co.  
7 May 1992 T. H. Kent

92-0

Brown Pelican 92-10 P-0328  
De Soto N.W.R., Harrison Co.  
7 May 1992 T. H. Kent

## DOCUMENTATION OF RARE BIRD SIGHTING

by B. J. Rose  
14937 "N" St.  
Omaha, NE 68137

Species: **Brown Pelican**

No. of birds seen: 1 Sex: Unknown Plumage: Adult ?

Date(s): MAY 6, 1992 Time bird seen: 9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

Locality: (Nearest town, county, state): DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge, Harrison County, IA, and Washington County, NE. It was on the south end of the oxbow, just above the dam.

Optical equipment: 10x40 Optolith binoculars.

If photographed, copy is enclosed. 3 prints Equipment used: 35 mm Chinon w/600 mm Novoflex lens.

Light conditions: Fairly bright sun.

Distance from bird: 50 - 300 yards; How measured: Estimated

Bird's behavior: The bird was consuming a large bullhead (#1) when we first drove into the picnic area. It swam over to the Nebraska side of the oxbow (#2); three white pelicans were in the vicinity. We then drove over to the Nebraska side, whereupon it swam to the Iowa side. It then flew towards the dam, along the Iowa side (#3).

Habitat: Missouri River oxbow lake.

Other observers (w/names & addresses): Babs Padelford - Bellevue, NE.

Description of bird(s): A large brown pelican, with whitish face and down front of neck. A small tuft of yellowish feathers was located on the top rear of the crown.

Description of calls or sounds, and method of delivery: None heard.

Similar species and how eliminated: White Pelican is white with black wing tips; some were present for comparison.

Prior experience with this and similar species: Many times along Atlantic, Gulf and Pacific coasts. I also photographed the Brown Pelican near Fremont, NE, in 5/91.

This report was written from notes made during observation \_\_\_\_\_; after observation X; or from memory \_\_\_\_\_. Date of documentation 5/14/92; Date of observation 5/6/92.

B. J. Rose  
14937 "N" St.  
Omaha, NE 68137

*B. J. Rose*

Date 5/14/92

# DOCUMENTATION OF EXTRAORDINARY BIRD SIGHTING

*Species:* Brown Pelican; *Number:* 1

*Location:* De Soto N.W.R., Iowa and Nebraska sides of lake.

*Date:* 7 May 1992; *Time:* 12:35 to 1:05 p.m.

*Name and address:* Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246.

*Others before/with/after:* Reported to birdline by Ross Silcock; Jim Fuller and Dick Tetrault with me.

*Habitat and circumstances:* Backwater cut-off of Missouri River

*Description of bird:* We had looked at all of the areas several times over four hours. On our last try, the bird was swimming in the middle of the lake at the southwest end. It flew and circled by us and went up the lake. We followed it on the inside of the horseshoe and lost it for a while. We relocated it at fairly close range and I took photos of it on the water and flying. The large bill and pouch, relatively thin neck, and large body made the bird obviously a pelican. The bird was all brown except for the face, which was white on the front half, with white extending down the front of the neck. I did not see any yellow on the forehead. The bill was brown. The back of the crown and neck were a richer brown. The flight feathers from above were black compared to the brown of the coverts. The bird appeared smaller than the many American White Pelicans in the area (but none were present for direct comparison). In flight the body moved up and down in opposite direction of the wing movement. The tail was quite short and wedge-shaped. We did not see the bird plunge-dive. I suspect the photos will show more detail than I saw. The bird did not sit on the water long enough for prolonged view with a scope.

*Voice:* not heard.

*Similar species:* I am only familiar (at the moment) with two of the world's six species of pelicans. The color, size, and flight differences with American White Pelican were obvious. The plumage is adult summer, but not as bright as it might be. The drawing of the flying bird in Peterson's Field Guide to the Birds fits what I saw very well.

*Any one have reservations?:* No.

*Light:* Sunny, varying angles; *Distance:* 30 to several hundred yards; *Optics:* 10x binocular, 420mm lens.

*Previous experience:* Have seen many, but not in Iowa.

*References before/after viewing:* None until next day.

*Time of notes:* During viewing time; *Final typing:* 21 hours.

*Handwritten signature:* T.H. Kent

DOCUMENTATION OF RARE BIRD SIGHTING

92-10

SPECIES: Brown Pelican.

LOCATION: Desoto NWR, Harrison County.

DATE & TIME: 7 May, 1992 (12:35-12:50 PM)

OBSERVER: Jim Fuller, 6 Longview Knoll, NE, Iowa City, Iowa, 52240.

OTHER OBSERVERS: With me were Tom Kent and Dick Tetrault. Before was Ross Silcock, and refuge personnel. After were Mob.

BACKGROUND: A brown pelican was reported to the Iowa Birdline as having been present at this location since April 29th. It had been seen at several locations on the oxbow lake, including near the visitor's center. Most recently, it had been observed in the extreme southeast corner of the lake, which is where we started our search. After 2-3 looks at every observation point, the bird was found sitting on the lake in the extreme southeast corner. It soon flew north, and we relocated it twice, and watched it both on water and in flight.

DESCRIPTION: This large dark bird could be identified as nothing but a pelican, with the mammoth bill, and unique head and body shape. Size was judged to be smaller than that of a white pelican, although no bird of that species was ever within view at the same time. The body was basically a grey color. The neck was long, but the bill, which was grey in color was equally long. The top of the head and sides of the neck were a clean white color, and the back of the head and neck were a rich chestnut brown. The front of the neck was brown. The tail was short, grey, and wedge shaped. I could not get an eye color, and the legs were never seen. The bird flew relatively low over the water, but was never seen to dive. No vocalization was heard.

SIMILAR SPECIES: White pelican is the wrong color. There were white pelicans also present on the lake.

VIEWING CONDITIONS and OPTICS: The bird was viewed both sitting and flying at distances varying from 30-150 yards. Swift Audubon binoculars (8.5 X 44) were used, and a brief look of the sitting bird was obtained through a KOWA-TSN4 telescope at 100 yards using 20X. The day was warm and sunny, and the bird was originally viewed looking to the southwest, and later toward the north, east, and northeast.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE: Seen numerous times along the coasts of Georgia, Florida, Texas, and California.

NOTES & REFERENCES: Field notes were made immediately after viewing, and this form was typed on 5/11/92. No field guides were consulted until after notes were written, and then National Geographic was viewed.

DOCUMENTATION FORM  
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

92-10

What species? Brown Pelican How many? 1 -ad.

Location? S.E. corner, Desoto N.W.R., IA.

Type of Habitat? Oxbow lake

When? date(s): May 11, 1992 time: 9:30 to 9:45 AM CST

Who? your name and address: Peter C. Petersen, 235 McClellan Blvd, Dav, IA

Others with you: Brian Stevins

Others before or after you: refuge staff, mob

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, undertail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

Dark pelican, smaller than Am. White Pelicans with it.  
The large bill was grey as were the legs (perched on a log).  
Top of head + foreneck white, hindneck rich dark brown.  
Body greyish brown, also wings. See photo.

Similar species; how eliminated Am. White Pelican - white + black plumage, size

Did any one disagree or have reservations about the identification? no  
If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), optical equipment. sky o.c. - bird est. at 40m. closest, 10x40 zeiss binocs, 1000mm telephoto.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Have seen many times on Ex. W. coasts

References and persons consulted before writing description: none

How long before field notes made? — this form completed? 6 hrs

Send completed form to Field Reports or CBC editor (address on back cover of Iowa Bird Life).