

Clark's Grebe
21 May 1999
Blue L., Monona Co., IA
*P & R Allen, *J. Fuller, *Kent
IBL 69:92, 70:144

Record Number: 99-05
Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATIONS

Pam and Reid Allen (21 May), 1601 Pleasant St., West Des
Moines 50265 [9/17/99]
Thomas H. Kent (25 May), 211 Richards St., Iowa City 52246
Jim Fuller (25 May)

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 69:92
Records Committee: IBL 70:144

VOTE: 7 A-D

A-D, Are there photos? Helpful was Allen's observation of the
eye being surrounded by white on both sides of face.

A-D, All saw the same details concerning bill color and white
around the eye.

99-05

DOCUMENTATION

SPECIES: Clark's Grebe (*Aechmophorus clarkii*)

HOW MANY: 1

LOCATION: Monona County, South Blue Lake

DATE: May 21, 1999

TIME & VIEWING CONDITIONS: Approximately 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. C.D.T. Sunny skies overhead (and behind us--we're viewing north and east). Viewed and photographed from a distance of 300 - 400 yards.

FIRST OBSERVATION MADE BY: Pam and Reid Allen

DOCUMENTERS' NAMES & ADDRESS: Pam Allen, 1601 Pleasant Street
West Des Moines, IA 50265-2331 (written)
Reid Allen, same address as above,
(photographic, if the photos turn out)

OTHERS WHO SAW BIRD: None while we were viewing bird.

DESCRIPTION OF BIRD: This large, long-necked grebe was with 3 Western Grebes and had a long, pointed, bright orangish/yellow bill with a very noticeable black line running along the ridge of the upper mandible. Both eyes were surrounded by white. The lores were white as well on both sides of the face. The black cap extended from the top of the bill over the crown and down the nape and along the back of the neck down to the back of the bird. The black lining down the back of the neck was much narrower than on the accompanying Western Grebes. The main body of the bird seemed to be a lighter greyish-black than the back of the neck and the cap/crown, with the flanks showing a much lighter appearance. This bird did not vocalize or fly during the time it was being observed. It was feeding (by diving).

SIMILAR SPECIES AND HOW ELIMINATED: The Western Grebes (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*) had a much duller, greyish-greenish yellow bill and the body and flanks were blacker. Plus, the black cap extended over the eyes and lores. The Western Grebes seemed to be slightly smaller headed than the Clark's Grebe.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE: Have seen many Western Grebes and in December of 1997 we found a Clark's Grebe in Iowa at Diamond Lake in Poweshiek Co.

EQUIPMENT: Bausch & Lomb Elite 8x42 and 10x42 binoculars (nitrogen-purged models); Kowa TSN-4 spotting scope; photographed by Reid I. Allen with a Canon A2E camera with a 400 mm lens and with an 800 mm telephoto attachment on the Kowa TSN-4 spotting scope.

HOW LONG BEFORE FIELD NOTES MADE: During observation of bird.

REFERENCES CONSULTED: None until after Field Notes made. Then Field Guide to Birds of North America, National Geographic Society, Second Edition, 1987.

HOW LONG BEFORE THIS FORM COMPLETED: June 2, 1999.

99-05

DOCUMENTATION OF EXTRAORDINARY BIRD SIGHTING

Species: Clark's Grebe; **Number:** 1

Location: Blue Lake, Monona Co., Iowa

Date: 25 May 1999; **Time:** 11:00 to about 11:45 a.m. (two visits to spot)

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

Others before/with/after: reported on Birdline

Habitat and circumstances: Missouri River bottoms backwater marsh

Description of bird: A large, long-necked grebe was swimming on the far edge of the water when I arrived. It had white under parts and dark upper parts. The bill was long, pointed, and bright yellow. The black cap appeared to be above where I would expect the eye to be with white in the loreal area. The black on the back of the nape was narrow. The back had some light feathers and was gray-black; i.e., lighter than usual for a Western Grebe. On the second stop, the bird was only half way across the lake and I was able to see that the eye was in the white area when the bird turned its head at an angle that made the eye visible.

Voice: not heard

Similar species: The bright yellow bill is the best field mark to distinguish Clark's from Western Grebe. In spring the lack of black covering the eye is also a good field mark. The back color and narrowness of the black on the nape are less reliable.

Any one have reservations?: I didn't talk to anyone else who saw the bird. Earlier, a western was said to be present also, but I did not see it.

Light: sunny with side light (looking east); **Distance:** 75 to 150 yards (guess); **Optics:** 20x scope.

Previous experience: I have seen two Clark's in Iowa and many in the west.

References before/after viewing: none

Time of notes: during observation; **Final typing:** 2 days

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DETAILS FOR RARE SIGHTINGS:

J. Fuller

CLARK'S GREBE

South Blue Lake (Monona County)

5/25/99 (2 PM)

Telescope @ 75 yards

Details: Black was only on the crown and down back of neck. The red eye was entirely enclosed by white. The bill was a yellow-orange color.

Later a Western Grebe was seen at a different location on the same lake. Its eye was entirely within the black continuous from the crown. The bill was a rather pale yellow-green or even yellow-gray color.

GREATER PRAIRIE CHICKEN

Kellerton WA (Ringgold County)

4/18/99 (7-8 AM)

Telescope at 80 yards

Details: Eleven chickens were displaying on a lek at the rise of a small hill. They were jumping, flying a short distance and strutting, as well as booming (a noise that sounded like blowing over a pop bottle). There were also two female birds. The male brown barred birds displayed yellow neck sacs, and "ears". The females were also brown barred, but not as prominently, were smaller, and seemed to have a shorter tail