

Ibis species

8 May 1957

Credit Island, Scott Co., IA

E. T. Greer, T. Morrissey

Greer 1957

Record Number: 81-IZ

Classification: A-D

REFERENCE

Greer, E. T. 1957. Shore-birds and others in the Davenport region. IBL 27:97-98.

VOTE (1981): for sp. 1-II, 4-III; for White-faced 1-V, 4-VI; for Glossy 1-II, 5-III, 1-V

Not sure any better identification can be made -- except could have described bill and leg color. Need to know if all White-faced mature in spring.

Lack of contrast between plumage and bare facial skin suggests bird in basic plumage.

Reasonable description--two observers.

describes color of skin around eye -- not red (obs. in May). above eliminate WF but slight chance incorrect. Obvious Plegadis ibis.

RECONSIDERATION (at meeting, 5 Sep 1981): Glossy Ibis IV (7/0).

Ibis sp.

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Shore-birds and Others in the Davenport Region.—On the afternoon of May 8, 1957, I heard of a strange wading bird that had been seen at Credit Island and was thought by the first viewer to be an adult Little Blue Heron. I got in touch with Tom Morrissey at St. Ambrose College and we went to the Island to investigate. A grassy mud flat at the upper end of the Credit Island harbor had a mixed group of shore-birds including Semipalmated Plover, Least, Baird's, Spotted, Pectoral and Solitary Sandpipers, and a group of Great Blue Herons and American Egrets. Close study with 7x50 glasses and a 20-power 'scope at a distance estimated at less than 200 feet finally disclosed the strange bird, which we identified as the Eastern Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*). Viewing conditions were perfect—afternoon light coming from behind us and from the left as we observed. The down-curved bill and the shiny plumage, which appeared to be a greenish black not unlike that of a Grackle, were clearly apparent. There appeared to be no pronounced contrast between the general tone of the plumage and the skin around bill and eye. There was no trace of the red skin or the white facial feathers of the White-faced Glossy Ibis.] 7

The bird fed in the wet grass and the shallow water for as long as we were able to watch. We kept it under observation for about a half hour before our schedules made it necessary that we leave. A check was made on each of the two days following, both of the same area and of the similar Nahant marsh a few miles away, but the bird was not seen again. On May 10, however, the same mud flat had a Willet, a Wilson's Phalarope and a Bonaparte's Gull feeding so close together they could be observed through the 'scope without moving at all.

I was interested to notice in the spring season report in Audubon Field Notes several reports of Ibis in unusual locations in the north.

The area west of McCausland is one of the best in the Davenport region for shore-birds when water conditions are right. The spring of 1957 was unusually poor due to an almost complete lack of water in the best locations.

The good rains of mid and late summer changed the picture and produced some ideal situations. On August 31, Tom Morrissey and I were able to check a number of these locations. The best was a field about 2 miles west of McCausland with several good pasture ponds. Our attention was attracted first by the call notes of Golden Plover, often found in the area in spring—though not in 1957—but never found there in the fall by either of us until this year. We found three, all still in a predominantly summer plumage. There were also both Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, eight Dowitchers, a large group of Wilson's Snipe, Semipalmated Plover, Least, Pectoral and Solitary Sandpipers. The different species tended to feed more or less together but when flushed flew away as one compact flock.—REV. EDWARD T. GREER, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Davenport, Iowa.