

Reddish Egret
5 Sep 1993
w of Colfax, Jasper Co., IA
*Schantz, *****
to 10 Sep; P-0406, IBL 64:10, 68, Schantz (66:63-4)

Record Number: 93-20
Classification: A-P

DOCUMENTATIONS

- Tim Schantz (5 Sep), Route 1, Otley IA 50214 [2/23/94]
- Peter C. Petersen (6 Sep), 235 McClellan Blvd., Davenport 50803
- Ann Johnson (6 Sep), 532 120th Ave., Norwalk 50211
- Ross Silcock (6 Sep), Box 300, Tabor 51653
- Thomas H. Kent (6 Sep), 211 Richards St., Iowa City 52246
- Pam Allen (6 Sep), 1601 Pleasant St., West Des Moines 50265
- [Ray Cummins] (6 Sep?)
- Jim Fuller (7 Sep), 6 Longview Knoll, Iowa City 52240
- Randy Pinkston (7 Sep), 526 Reno St., Iowa City 52245
- Chris Edwards (8 Sep), 85 Whitman Ave., North Liberty 52317

PHOTOGRAPHS

Tim Schantz, 5 Sep, P-0406

REFERENCES

- Field Reports: IBL 64:10
- Records Committee: IBL 64:68
- Photographs: AB 48:159
- Shantz, T. 1996. Reddish Egret in Jasper County. Iowa Bird Life 66:63-64.

VOTE: 7 A-P

A-P, All documentors agreed that the Little Blue Heron is the only bird of similar size and shape, but it would be dark blue not grayish brown like this bird.

to look for the rare longspur, and I was rewarded for my effort. Although this species may occur anywhere in the state, it is undoubtedly more likely in the west. Snow storms in April not only concentrate birds along the roads, but may also push migrants farther east than usual. Chestnut-collared Longspur is a rare vagrant to eastern United States and Canada.

LITERATURE CITED

Bierman, D. 1986. Chestnut-collared Longspur in Woodbury County. *Iowa Bird Life* 56:95.
Dinsmore, J. J., T. H. Kent, D. Koenig, P. C. Petersen, and D. M. Roosa. 1984. *Iowa Birds*. Iowa State University Press, Ames.

211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246

REDDISH EGRET IN JASPER COUNTY

TIM SCHANTZ

September 5th, 1993 was a drizzly overcast day. In the late afternoon I checked the flooded fields west of Colfax along the Skunk River in Jasper County. During the past week, numerous shorebirds and waders had been seen in this area. In a small flooded area near the side of the road, I saw a small heron crouched at the edge in some sparse vegetation. As I took pictures of it from the car, it walked to the middle of the pool and started to flail around wildly, flapping its wings and shuffling its feet as it darted its bill at unseen prey. I recognized the bird as an immature Reddish Egret. Ironically, Stephen Dinsmore and I had found a bird in the same plumage on Cape Hatteras, North Carolina, just ten days before.



I noted a wader much smaller than a Great Blue Heron, with plum-colored wash to a generally gray plumage. There were cinnamon tones on the head and neck, and the underwing linings were also cinnamon colored. The eyes were pale yellow, and the bill two toned in color. Its legs appeared proportionally long for the size of its body.

After photographing the bird and noting all the details, I alerted other birders. In the fading light we were unable to find the bird that evening. The next morning I relocated the bird about a half mile to the east. The bird was last seen on 10 September 1995 and was observed by many. This is the first report of this species for Iowa.

The Reddish Egret breeds locally on both coasts of Mexico, in the southeastern United States, and the Caribbean (Howell and Webb 1995). Reddish Egrets have been known to wander along the coast of the United States as far north as New England in the East and central California in the West (DeSante and Pyle 1986). These birds are almost always found on salt water lagoons. Inland records on fresh water are extremely rare anywhere in North America. All reports of this species in the Midwest were old and judged hypothetical until the unprecedented dispersal in 1993. In 1993, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, and Michigan all had their first confirmed state record of this species! In contacting various state record committees, I discovered that Georgia had above normal reports, South Carolina had three, North Carolina had eight, and Delaware, Iowa, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan all had one. While some

of these reports may have involved the same bird, there were undoubtedly more Reddish Egrets farther north and inland than was ever noted before.

The interesting question is why? The 1993 records all occurred from late July to mid-September and were predominantly immature birds. These dates would indicate a post-breeding dispersal that is common among waders. The United States breeding population of Reddish Egrets was estimated at about 2,000 pairs (Ehrlich et al. 1988). I could not find any recent population estimates but with the increased protection of breeding colonies, this species is most likely more common today. The Midwest flooding may have played a part in the rash of records. While the flooding could have provided more habitat for Reddish Egrets to reach the Midwest, the 1993 dispersal was noted along the East Coast prior to Midwest flooding. With the continued protection of this species and its breeding colonies, it will be interesting to see if the Reddish Egret continues to be a vagrant to the Midwest.

Thanks to Ken Brock, Philip Chu, Ricky Davis, Lynea Hinchman, David B. Johnson, Charles Keller, and Tom Kent who all provided records or helpful comments in the preparation of this note.

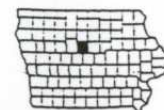
LITERATURE CITED

DeSante, D., and P. Pyle, 1986 *Distributional Checklist of North American Birds*. Artemisia Press, Lee Vining, California.
Ehrlich, Paul R., D. S. Dobkin, and D. Wheye. 1988. *The Birder's Handbook*. Simon and Schuster, New York, New York.
Howell, S. N. G., and S. Webb. 1995. *A Guide to The Birds of Mexico and Northern Central America*, Oxford University Press.

RED-THROATED LOON AT LITTLE WALL LAKE

MARK PROESCHOLDT

On 22 April 1995, Beth Proescholdt, Russ Widner, and I found a small loon in basic plumage at Little Wall Lake in Hamilton County. The loon was on the east side of the lake with lots of ducks. We moved closer and ended up getting very good looks at it.



The loon was light gray and white in color. It had a very thin, delicate bill, and the lower mandible was curved up slightly. The loon sometimes held the bill horizontally, but often held it upturned. It had a red eye and a thin neck which was very white on the front. The gray coloration on the back of the head was lighter in color than the dark gray back. At close range, I could see that the white area in front of the eye and the eye itself were not enclosed in the dark coloration of the head. We saw white speckling on the dark gray back. The front of the neck was white, noticeably changing to gray on the side of the neck but there was not an extremely sharp division on the neck like a Pacific Loon has. The back of its head was gray and its flanks were white colored along the water line.

The bird was floating on the surface with its head resting on its back and then swimming and diving. We watched it for approximately two hours in the afternoon and studied it through binoculars and two spotting scopes for quite some time from as close as 25 yards away. The last time we saw this loon, it popped up right beside us briefly about 20 feet away as Russ was trying to photograph it. This loon remained in the area and was seen by others on 23 and 24 April.



Reddish Egret P-0406
w. of Colfax, Jasper Co., IA
5 Sep 1993 Tim Schantz

93-20

> 09' -02 NNNNN 441 111-026

Iowa Rare Bird Report

Species: Reddish Egret (*Egretta rufescens*)

Observers: Tim Schantz

Date of Observation: 5 September 1993

Location: Jasper County

Optics: Zeiss 10 X 40B, Nikon 8008, 400mm Sigma

Description: Heron-like bird much smaller than Great Blue Heron, Plum colored wash to gray plumage. Cinnamon tones on the head and neck. Pale yellow eye. Two toned bill, Cinnamon underwing linings. (See Photo)

Circumstances: At 5:30 PM I stopped by an area west of Colfax. This spot had been flooded and reflooded three times this year. Good numbers of Egrets and Herons were consistent. I would check the spot at least once every three days in hopes of finding a Little Blue Heron or Ibis. The evening of the 5th was drizzly and overcast. I stopped to scan a small pool in a flooded field very near the road. I noticed a gray bird crouched at the edge of the pool. About the time I noticed the bird, it popped up and walked into the middle of the pool. It flapped its wings a few times revealing cinnamon wing linings. I recognized the bird as an immature Reddish Egret. I took five photographs of the bird, reviewed my notes, then called the bird line and many birders from Colfax. I returned immediately and could not relocate the bird. Despite many birders searching we could not find the bird that evening. The next day at sunrise I found the bird about a quarter mile to the east. I saw the bird every day, seeing it last on 10th of September in a pool just north of where I originally found it. Oddly enough- Steve Dinsmore and I had found a Reddish Egret in the same plumage just ten days prior on Cape Hatteras, North Carolina where it is a relatively rare species.



Tim Schantz
Naturalist

Marion County Conservation Board

Route 1
Otley, Iowa 50214

Cordova Park
Res: 515-627-5935

DOCUMENTATION FORM
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

93-20

What species? Reddish Egret - imm. How many? 1

Location? 1 mi. W. Colfax, Jasper Co., IA.

Type of Habitat? Flooded Field - very weedy

When? date(s): Sep. 6, 1993 time: 7:30 AM to 7:45 AM CDT.
8:00 AM to 8:05 AM CDT

Who? your name and address: Peter L. Petersen, 235 McClellan Blvd, Davenport, IA.

Others with you: Kelly McElroy, Dan Dorrance, W. Ross Silcock + Jim Sinclair 5/88

Others before or after you: Tim Schantz - with us prior (Sep. 5)

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.

Medium sized heron, much smaller than nearby Great Blue Herons but not as small as Snowy or Little Blue. Typical heron shape. Bill black at tip, horn color at base, colors merging. Body color about the same shade of brown as the head & neck of a young ^{Sandhill Crane.} Head & neck same color below, more cinnamon above back of neck, legs grey. Not seen in flight. Feeding in typical heron manner, no dancing behavior seen to any great extent, just one very brief dance.

Similar species; how eliminated:

Sandhill Crane - much larger
Little Blue Heron - smaller, blue plumage

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

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), optical equipment. Thin cloud bank, sun to right + mostly behind us - est. range 300m. Kowa Scope, 30-45X

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Have seen this species many times on the South-East coast, in Florida + along the Gulf Coast

References and persons consulted before writing description: Checked Geo guide + Heron's Habit prior to sighting

How long before field notes made? during obs. this form completed? 4 hrs

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

DOCUMENTATION FORM
Unusual Bird Sightings in Iowa

Species: Reddish Egret

Location: near Colfax, Jasper County, IA

Habitat: Flooded farm field near Skunk River

Date: 6 September 1993

Time: Apr. 10:30 to 10:35 and 13:20 to 13:35

Name and Address: Ann Johnson, 532 120th Avenue, Norwalk, IA 50211

Other Observers: Found by Tim Schantz. Many other observers.

Description of bird: When the bird was first seen its long legs and long pointed bill made it an obvious member of the heron family. It walked along a rather grassy area and did very little foot shuffling. The body was a rather uniform pearl gray and the head and neck were a pale pink. As it passed in front of a Great Blue Heron, the size differential was quite noticeable as the Reddish Egret appeared nearly half the size of the Great Blue. At about 1:20 p.m. the bird flushed and flew first along the tree line and then circled over us. As it flew the bird appeared nearly uniformly gray and the pink on the head and neck was not very evident. The legs were dark and the bill was light basally with dark running back from the tip about 1/4 to 1/3 of the way. From below the flight feathers were pale with the inner wing appearing darker with a cinnamon wash. The flight pattern was very bouyant and graceful, constrasting with the lumbering flight of the numerous Great Blue Herons. The bird then landed in a dead tree where it was soon joined by a crow. The body size of the egret was nearly the same as the crow which accentuated the long legged look.

Similar species and how eliminated: The size in comparison with both Great Blue Heron and American Crow eliminated the larger waders including the most similar Sandhill Crane. Adult Little Blue Heron would have a darker bill and the body would appear darker than this bird. It would also not have the cinnamon wing linings. Night-herons are stockier birds and would not appear as graceful in flight.

Viewing conditions (light, distance, optics): The light was good with the sun pretty much at our backs, but heat shimmers caused a few problems as the day progressed. The bird was observed from approximately 500 yards initially, although as it flew over it was much closer.

Previous experience: I have seen Reddish Egrets on the Gulf Coast and as recently as this summer observed an immature bird in Delaware.

References consulted during observation: NGS Field Guide

References consulted before completing documentation: NGS Field Guide

Field notes made: After each sighting

Documentation completed: Same evening

DOCUMENTATION OF EXTRAORDINARY BIRD SIGHTING IN IOWA

Species: REDDISH EGRET
 Date: 6 September 1993
 Location: Section 2-79-21, about 1 mile west of Colfax, Jasper County.
 Observer: Ross Silcock
 Others: 20+; a virtual IOU convention. First found by Tim Schantz.
 Weather: Perfect for viewing; temp about 50-60 degrees, no wind, sunshine.

I arrived at the place where Tim Schantz had found the bird the previous evening at daylight, about 6.45 am. Tim arrived soon after and found the bird in an unplanted weedy crop field with floodwater still present, forming pools. The field was immediately south of the South Skunk River. Our first look consisted of the bird flying about 200 yards from its presumed roost sight near four Great Egrets and landing in a weedy area where we could not see it. The brief flight view indicated that the bird was greyish-blue with some reddish-brown coloration on the head and neck, and also some reddish-brown coloration in the wing linings. These characteristics were strongly indicative of Reddish Egret, but we had to wait about a half hour before it reappeared, at which time other observers had arrived, including Peter Petersen and Jim Sinclair. At this time we observed the bird for about 5-10 minutes as it walked rapidly to and fro feeding, occasionally taking a quick sideways hop and flapping its wings. It fed in a crouch, with its head and neck low and forward. It was thus difficult to see on occasion as it fed amongst the weeds. It suddenly disappeared, and it was about two hours before we could find it again. It reappeared in about the same place, and was seen feeding in the same manner for about five minutes, whereupon it disappeared again. On this occasion it fed along the edge of a narrow pool of water and finally disappeared behind a patch of smartweed. It did not reappear, and it is presumed that it was roosting out of view. I left after about an hour at about 11 am without seeing the bird again. About 20 observers saw the bird on this third appearance.

Observation through Kowa scopes at a distance of about 250 yards in excellent light with no distortion showed a chunky heron slightly smaller than a Great Egret with grey-blue wings (similar in color to those of a Great Blue Heron, but paler), a pinkish, reddish-brown head and neck, and dark bill and legs. The bill was rather heavy, more so than a Snowy Egret, about the same as a Great Egret, and was paler at the base, perhaps the proximal quarter or fifth of the bill. The bird appeared to be an immature dark phase individual based on the rather limited pale coloration on the bill and the two-color appearance of the plumage.

Little Blue Heron adults are smaller and slimmer than this bird, and plumage is unicolorous. Tricolored Heron is a little larger, slimmer, and has a prominent white belly. The plumage characters described above eliminate these possibilities and confirm identification as a Reddish Egret.



Ross Silcock.

DOCUMENTATION OF EXTRAORDINARY BIRD SIGHTING

Species: Reddish Egret; Number: 1 juv.

Location: 1.5 miles west of Colfax, Jasper County, IA

Date: 6 September 1993; Time: 12:50 to 1:40 p.m.

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

Others before/with/after: Found by Tim Schantz on 5 Sep and seen by many earlier in the morning of 6 Sep.

Jim Scheib, Pam and Reid Allen, Hank Zaletel and I walked across the muddy field to find it again.

Habitat and circumstances: flooded fields in river bottom area.

Description of bird: I spotted the bird standing on some old dry reeds that looked like old cattails. It was a small slim heron, about half the size of a Great Blue Heron. This size comparison was confirmed a little later when it stood next to a Great Blue. Overall the bird appeared very gray and plain. The head and neck were a uniform light gray, but when we got closer we could detect a faint pink-red tinge. The wings were gray-blue. In flight the wings and tail were totally uniform gray-blue. The rump was the same color (no white seen). The bill was long and relative thin compared to a Great Blue. The tip was gray-blue and the base a dirty yellow. These colors were difficult to see at a distance and there was not a sharp cut-off in the colors. The eye appeared light at some angles, dark at others. The legs and feet were dark gray-blue. Both standing and in flight, the legs appeared very long. In flight, the feet were quite large compared to the legs. The underparts may have been lighter than the neck and I once saw a little rusty area on the forepart of the flank. The underwing showed cinnamon colored wing coverts and light gray flight feathers. The head and neck were very slender and without plumes. When walking in the water, the bird moved along rather rapidly at times, but I did not see any "dancing" behavior. Eventually the bird flew, circled by us and the crowd standing back at the road, and then flew down the road and lit in a dead tree, where it remained when we left. We drove up near the dead tree, but the sun was behind the bird, and we could see no additional features, except that the body size was similar to a crow that lit next to it.

Voice: not heard

Similar species: I have never seen a juvenile Reddish Egret before nor any bird that looked like this one. Little Blue Herons are either deep blue, white, or splotchy white and blue. Tricolored Herons always have a sharp contrast between belly/foreneck and the rest of the bird. Great Blue Heron is much larger and with many more contrasting feather tracks. The shape of this bird was unlike a bittern or night-heron. All of the features fit with juvenile Reddish Egret.

Any one have reservations?: no

Light: sunny, sun behind us; Distance: 400 to 75 yards (guess); Optics: 10x binocular, 20x scope.

Previous experience: I have seen adults in the south, as well as adults and juveniles of all of the other possible species.

References before/after viewing: Looked at National Geographic Guide before and during viewing.

Time of notes: during observation; Final typing: 22 hours.

DOCUMENTATION

SPECIES: **Reddish Egret (*Egretta rufescens*)**

HOW MANY: One (1)

LOCATION: Jasper County, 1 mile west of Colfax on F-48

HABITAT: Flooded river bottom land and flooded farm fields

DATE: September 6, 1993

TIME & LENGTH OF OBSERVATION: 1:11 to 2:00 p.m. Bird observed feeding, flying and sitting.

FIRST OBSERVATION MADE BY: Tim Schantz, September 5, 1993

DOCUMENTER'S NAME & ADDRESS: Pam Allen, 1601 Pleasant Street,
West Des Moines, IA 50265

OTHERS WHO SAW BIRD: Reid Allen, 1601 Pleasant Street,
West Des Moines, IA 50265
Thomas Kent, Iowa City
Jim Scheib, Iowa City
Hank Zaletel, Colo
m.o.b.

DESCRIPTION OF BIRD: This mid-sized egret was about 1/2 the size of a Great Blue Heron and was in immature plumage. The egret's bill was bi-colored; the right side seemed to be more bi-colored than the left side. The legs were very long and darkish grey; the bill was long and slender with a dark bluish tip and pinkish/yellowy base. There was a light ring around the eye. The wings and body were slate bluish-grey; the head, neck and back of neck was a fleshy-pinkish color. The wing linings were cinnamon colored and the rest of the underwing looked greyish-blue.

SIMILAR SPECIES AND HOW ELIMINATED: Little Blue Heron is smaller, shorter-legged and a little more slender. Other egrets and herons are white or more bi-colored than the Reddish Egret.

VIEWING CONDITIONS: Partly cloudy sky, with periods of bright sun. Viewed from a distance of approximately 100 to 175+ yards.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH SPECIES: Have viewed many of these birds in southern Texas.

EQUIPMENT: Bushnell 8 x 36 Custom Binoculars

Reddish Egret Documentation continued
Pam Allen

REFERENCES CONSULTED: After Field Notes made:
National Geographic Society Field Guide to the Birds
of North America, Second Edition, c. 1983, 1987.
The Audubon Society Master Guide to Birding, Vol.
1, c. 1983.

HOW LONG BEFORE
FIELD NOTES MADE: As bird was being observed.

HOW LONG BEFORE THIS
FORM COMPLETED: December 3, 1993.

PHOTOGRAPHIC
INFORMATION: If an article regarding the sighting of this bird is
written for Iowa Bird Life, Reid I. Allen has an excellent photograph of the many
birders looking for this bird. Please contact him for a slide to use with an article.

What Species? Reddish Egret (immature) How Many? 1

Location? 1 mi. west of Colfax IA. Jasper Co.

Type of Habitat? Flood water pool of the Skunk River

When? date(s): 9/05 1993 Time: 5:00pm to 6:00pm

Others with you: Gerald White

Circumstance? After waiting about 2 hrs Gerald White pointed out a smaller heron that just had landed with some resting Great Blue Herons and Am Egrets.

Description: The egret was a grayish brown compared to Great Blue Heron and the body was 1/3 smaller than a Great Egret standing right beside it. The bill was thinner to the base and slightly decurved. It was longer compared to its head than a Great Blue Heron compared to its head. The bill was all dark except for a small whitish tip. The neck was a little lighter shade of brown than the body when seen in good light. The Reddish Egret manner was different than the other two herons present making short crouched stocking type movements. It was intimidated by the other herons.

Similar species: Little Blue Heron adult would have darker body and neck with no brown tones.

Did anyone disagree or have reservations about the identification? N/A

Viewing conditions: Good light at 150 to 200 yds with a Kowa spotting scope.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Several sightings from Texas and Florida.

References: National Geographic during sighting.

How long before field notes made? during sighting This form completed? 3mo

*This documentation was sent
by Ray Cummins. ? 6 Sep. /THIC*

DOCUMENTATION OF UNUSUAL BIRD SIGHTING

SPECIES: Reddish Egret (Immature).

WHERE: One mile west of Colfax (Jasper County).

HABITAT: Flooded farm field along Skunk River.

DATE & TIME: 7 September, 1993 (5:05-5:45 PM).

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

OTHER OBSERVERS: Present were T. Schantz, D. Tetrault, D. Thompson, D. & V. Hendrickson, E. & J. Moeller, K. Nelson, R. Goranson, C. Fisher, Jan Walter. Discovered by T. Schantz and seen by M.Ob on 6 September.

BACKGROUND: Tim Schantz reported a bird of this species seen in a small wet area about a quarter mile from this location on 5 September, 1993. The bird was relocated at this location by M.Ob. the following day. Dick Tetrault and I arrived at the location about 1 PM and there were five other people there. We scoped the area where the bird had been seen which was 800-1000 yards away with no success, until the bird came flying into this area from the west about 5:00 PM.

DESCRIPTION: General size was about half that of the Great Blue Herons, which it was seen next to on several occasions. It was rather long-legged, even for a wading bird, thin-necked, and had a large bill relative to the size of its head. It was generally a dull light gray color, with the folded wings a little darker than the rest of the body. The bill was pointed and dark, except for a light base which could be seen only in good light. At times a rusty wash could be seen on the head and neck. When the bird raised its wings, sometimes a rusty axillary area could be seen. The long legs were dark.

BEHAVIOR: This was a very active bird. It often flapped its wings and danced while feeding. At all times, its motions were quick, compared to the slow paced and deliberate motions of the Great Blue Herons. Even when just walking, it was in a quick and even darting manner. It was seen catching and eating small white objects, presumed to be small fish or minnows.

SIMILAR SPECIES: The adult Little Blue Heron is the only small wading bird with which it might be confused, but that bird is blue-gray, has a two-tone bill, and is not known to dance while feeding.

VIEWING CONDITIONS & OPTICS: The bird was viewed for 40 minutes at a distance estimated to be 800-1000 yards. Viewing was to the north, and the lighting was good. The color of the legs of the Yellowlegs, and the bodies of Buff-breasted Sandpipers, Killdeer, and Golden Plover could be distinguished on birds in the same area. Viewing was with a KOWA-TSN4, 20-60X zoom lens, most often at 20X.

FIELD NOTES & REFERENCES: Field notes were made during viewing, and this report was typed two days later on 9 September. I looked over the wading bird section of the National Geographic Field Guide the evening before seeing this bird, and again in the car on the trip home.

DOCUMENTATION FOR FIRST STATE RECORD

Species: Reddish Egret, Egretta rufescens

Date: September 7, 1993

Time: 19:45-19:54 (last useful light)

Location: ~1 mile west of Colfax, Jasper County, Iowa

Weather: Overcast, mild

Description: The available light was poor and my observation (bird $\frac{1}{4}$ mile away) brief. My identification was made by the process of elimination. Nearby were 9 Great Blue Herons and 2 American White Pelicans. Compared to the Great Blue Herons, the bird was $\sim\frac{1}{2}$ overall size and $\sim\frac{2}{3}$ height standing with neck outstretched. It seemed intermediate in size between Little Blue Heron and Great Egret, although these species were not present for direct comparison. The bird appeared uniformly grayish or brownish-gray. Its overall tone was paler than that of the Great Blue Herons. At one point, the base of the bill appeared pale but this was not definite. On several occasions it was chased into brief flight by aggressive advances by the Great Blue Herons. Initially it was in the center of the heron group on the mudflat, but was soon driven to the periphery. In flight, the primaries were paler than the remainder of the mantle. In contrast, Great Blue Heron displayed dark primaries and a paler mantle.

Similar Species: Differed from Great Blue Heron as outlined above. Little Blue Heron smaller and much darker. Night-Herons smaller, less active, and show hunched posture with shorter neck.

Previous Experience: Lifelong experience with most North American waders in all plumages along the Upper Texas Coast.

Optical Equipment: Zeiss 10x40 binocular; Bausch & Lomb 30x scope

--Randy Pinkston
526 Reno Street
Iowa City, IA
52245-3039
Ph. (319) 351-0592

DOCUMENTATION FORM
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

What Species? Reddish Egret (immature)
How many? 1
Location? One mile west of Colfax, Jasper Co., IA
Type of Habitat? Wet partially flooded farm field
When? September 8, 1993, 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM
Who? Chris Edwards, 85 Whitman Ave., North Liberty, IA 52317
Others with you: Chuck Fuller, Burlington, IA and 2 others
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, undertail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

The bird was observed standing near several Great Blue Herons and was also seen in flight. Typical egret shape; long, slender neck; daggerlike bill; long legs. In size, approximately $3/5$ - $2/3$ size of nearby Great Blue Herons. Details of standing bird: bill mostly black with slightly paler brownish base; plumage coloration muted -- head and neck light reddish brown; back, wings and tail uniformly gray. Details of flying bird: underside of body and wings mostly pale or light gray, with large patches of reddish-brown on underside of wings; long blackish legs and feet were outstretched far beyond tail. The bird was not heard.

Similar species; how eliminated: Adult Little Blue Heron has much darker plumage and no reddish-brown on underwings.

Did anyone disagree or have reservations about the identification? No

Viewing conditions: Bright sunlight; approximately 100-150 yards; viewed with 45x telescope and 8x42 binoculars.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: No previous sightings of Reddish Egret; one previous sighting of adult Little Blue Heron.

References and persons consulted before writing description: Peterson and National Geographic field guides.

How long before field notes made? 2 hours
How long before this form completed? 2 hours