

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

1. Species Red-necked Grebe (*Podiceps grisegena*) 2. Number 1
Black Hawk County
3. Location Martin Marietta Sand Pits, Waterloo, IA (Adjacent to George Wyth S.P.)
4. Date: 4-12-81 5. Time Bird Seen: 11:30 to 12:00
6. Description of size, shape and color-pattern (describe in great detail all parts of the plumage, and beak and feet coloration, in addition, to the diagnostic characteristics, but include only what actually was seen in the field):
Top of head (crown and forehead) black; neck, rusty red; dark back, ^{very} light gray or white cheek patch and yellow bill. Bird was floating with eight Ruddy Ducks and appeared at first to be a very large Ruddy Duck, about 2 or 2½ times the size of the Ruddy's. Several times the bird floated with the Right side toward me and the yellow bill really stood out. The bill was very large and heavy compared to other Grebes and to me appeared more yellow than other accounts of this species that I have read. Overall a large Grebe with a stocky and stout appearance.
7. Description of voice, if heard: Not heard
8. Description of behavior: Floating on water, with several Ruddy Ducks, with head held to the rear resting on its back most of the time.
9. Habitat - general: Open water
specific: Flooded Sand pit
10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8. Explain:
Stocky appearance, long red neck and large white or gray patch on throat that extended through the auricular and into the nape, distinguished this bird from the Western, Horned or Eared Grebes.
11. Distance (how measured)? approximately 150 yds. 12. Optical equipment: 20x Bushnell Space master telescope & 7x35mm B+L binoculars
13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):
Overcast with strong filtered sunlight; Sun overhead & to left of observers, no shadow falling on our side of birds. We were facing south.
14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species: Have no experience with Red-necked Grebe. Have seen Western and Horned at close distances and Eared at farther distances.
15. Other observers: Tom Stone, Jr.; Bob Myers
16. Did the others agree with your identification? Yes
17. Other observers who independently identified this bird: Tom Stone, Jr.; Bob Myers
18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:
Robbins' Birds of North America; Peterson's Field Guide to the Birds, East. I already knew what the bird was when I saw it but wanted to see what the field guides said about the bird.
19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? 24 hours.

Signature: Francis L. Moore Address: 264 Western Avenue

Date: 4/13/81 City, State: Waterloo, IA 50701