

DOCUMENTATION FORM
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

What species? White-faced Ibis How many? 1

Location? Zirbel Slough, Clear Lake Iowa

Type of Habitat? Slough/Marsh

When? date(s): May 22, 1991 time: c. 7:30pm to: 7:32 pm

Who? your name and address: Kim L. Pinneke, P.O. Box 1092, Mason City, IA 50401

Others with you: NA

Others before or after you: NA

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.

While walking the dike, a dark-colored bird was flushed from some tall grass along the side of the path. The bird flew up and in front of this observer giving only a very brief glimpse. During the sighting the following was noted: the bird was about the size of a Black-crowned Night Heron and blackish in color. The bill was very prominent being quite long and curving downward. There appeared to be a white spot on the face and the legs in flight extended beyond the tail feathers. The bird was about twelve feet away at closest view before flying off to the north. Please note that the details witnessed for the greatest amount of time were the uniform blackish color, the long downward-curving bill and the legs extending beyond the tail. The white spot on the face only appeared momentarily. The entire sighting lasted for only a minute or so before the bird was lost from sight. In flight the neck of this bird seemed to be long and stretched out. No details noted on shape of wings.

Similar species; how eliminated:

Glossy Ibis was ruled out due to the white patch noticed. Cormorant ruled out by bill shape and position of legs in flight. Mergansers ruled out by their lack of uniform coloring and bill shape. American Coot ruled out by bill shape. Night Herons ruled out by coloring, bill shape and length of neck in flight. Other herons ruled out by the same criteria. Stilts and Dowitchers ruled out by bill shape. Whimbrel and Curlew ruled out by size, coloring, by their lack of prominent white face spot, and neck length.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about the identification? no

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), optical equipment.

Sky was mostly cloudy, sun in the WSW and bird flew up from due west and headed north. Distance was guessed at about 12 feet. My relative position to the bird at first sighting was to the right of where bird flew up. 7x50 binoculars used.

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

No previous experience with Ibis sp but much experience with herons and cormorants.

References and persons consulted before writing description:

Field notes were compared with Peterson's Eastern Guide, Golden Guide to Field Identification, and Audubon Field Guide to North American Birds: Eastern Region.

How long before field notes made? IN FIELD this form completed? 14 hours

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