

DOCUMENTATION FORM FOR EXTRAORDINARY BIRD SIGHTINGS IN IOWA

What species? Snowy Egret How many? 1Location? Lake RathbunType of habitat? Waters edge-sandy swimming beach and adjacent weedsWhen? date(s): September 29 '85 time: 4:45 to 4:55Who? your name and address: Thomas N. Johnson, 407 E. Wall, Centerville, IA 52544

others with you: _____

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, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

I observed an all white heron walking along the water's edge along a swimming beach. I had observed two great egrets and four great blue herons in the same drive on top of the Rathbun Dam. I knew this bird was different by its smaller size. I stopped in the parking lot and observed it had all white plumage with a black, slender bill and black legs. I observed its yellow feet as it walked further onto the beach following a rain made small river. The bird waded along the water's edge and into an adjacent weedy area and back along the beach. I went to call Ray Cummins, who I know wanted this bird for his Iowa list. I waited on top of the dam for Ray when the bird flew from the beach into the marina channel area and out of sight. It was all white in flight.

Similar species and how eliminated:

Cattle Egret - There was no yellow bill.Little Blue Heron - this bird did not have yellow legs or any yellow on the bill. There was no blue on the wings sitting or in flight.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? _____

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: Cloudy, raining - light but more than a drizzle. Distance - 150 yds. estimated. Equipment - Nikon 8 x 23 binoculars. B & L spotting scope - 20 power.

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

Snowy egrets are common in Southern California marshes where I lived for 4 years. I also seen snowy egrets and cattle egrets at the Salton Sea area; I have seen little blue herons

References and persons consulted before writing description: _____ at Forny's Lake.

National Geographic: Birds of North America

Iowa Birds: Dinsmore, etc.

How long before field notes made? 10 minutes this form completed? same day

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