

DOCUMENTATION FORM

Species?Red-necked Grebe

How Many?1 winter adult

Location?Saylorville Reservoir, Polk Co.-above dam

Habitat?resting on large reservoir

Date?1 Nov 1987

Time?approx. 9:30-9:40 a.m.

Observers Name and address:Steve Dinsmore 4024 Arkansas Dr. Ames, IA
50010

Others who saw bird:Bery Engebretsen

Description of bird:At about 9 a.m., I met Bery at Saylorville and invited him to join me and use my boat to bird the reservoir. There was very dense fog on the lake, and we were hoping to sneak up on some gulls or ducks. At 9:15 a.m., we almost ran over a Western Grebe, and then at 9:30 a.m. we saw what we thought was another Western Grebe. The shape of the bird easily identified it as a grebe. The bird seemed smaller and stockier than a Western Grebe and was very big-headed. The bill was straight, thick, and rather long. I didn't see the bill color. The head and neck were grayish except for a light mark across the cheek. The upperparts were uniformly dark colored. The flanks were lighter than the back. We flushed the bird twice; on both occasions, a large, white patch on the secondaries was evident. The bird dove about a dozen times as we were chasing it. We concluded the bird was a winter-plumaged adult Red-necked Grebe. I have a photograph of the bird in flight.

Similar species and how eliminated:The size and shape eliminates loons and all other grebes except Western Grebe. The bill shape, light mark on the cheek, and the position of the wing patch eliminates Western Grebe.

Viewing conditions and equipment:Viewing conditions were not too good with dense fog and visibility of about 75 feet. We saw the bird from as close as 30 feet. I used Nikon 8x23 binoculars.

Previous experience with species:I have seen several Red-necked Grebes in Iowa, plus hundreds in Massachusetts.

References consulted:none

How long before field notes were made?none made

How long before this form was completed?4 days