

DOCUMENTATION OF EXTRAORDINARY BIRD SIGHTING

Species: Red-throated Loon; **Number:** 1 basic

Location: Lake Macbride, Johnson Co., IA

Date: 25 Nov 1998; **Time:** 11:20 to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 to 12:40 p.m.

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

Others before/with/after: none as of this time

Habitat and circumstances: large artificial lake

Description of bird: I was looking at a Common Loon when a smaller loon emerged. It was about 2/3 the size of a common, had a short neck, small head, and up-turned bill. It was white below and dark above. I thought it was a Red-throated Loon, but the distance was great. I drove around to the north side of the north arm and walked the path looking for it. Finally as I returned to the car, I spotted it. It spent most of the time under water. The white underparts, fore neck, and face were sharply demarcated. The bill was thin, gray, up-turned, and held above the horizontal. The top of the head and back of neck were medium gray and darker than the back. Again the bird was much smaller and thinner than a Common Loon in the area. I could not tell whether or not the eye was in the white area, and I could not make out white flecking on the back.

Voice: not heard

Similar species: The size, bill shape, and gray head and neck eliminate Pacific Loon or small Common Loon.

Any one have reservations?: no

Light: rear to side sunlight; **Distance:** ¼ mile; 200 yards (guess); **Optics:** 20x scope; 10x binocular

Previous experience: have seen several in Iowa and many elsewhere

References before/after viewing: looked at National Geographic Guide while viewing.

Time of notes: none; **Final typing:** 2 hours.