

Middlewestern Prairie Region
(Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio)

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD.

1. Species White-faced Ibis (*Plegadis sp.*) 2. Number: 1
3. Location The middle road of Bays Branch (Guthrie County-Iowa)
4. Date: May 1, 1977 (Sunday) 5. Time Bird seen: 215pm to 217pm
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):
He flew about 30 feet high and about 30 feet in front of our car which was parked on this road running through the middle of Bays Branch. He appeared darkish to blackish in color. About 20 inches long, flying slowly, neck stretched out in front of his body in flight, his feet trailing his body, an extremely long decurved bill. I watched him in flight with my scope until he went to the north end of the Bays Branch Area and lit. We drove to this area and I walked through this boggy area attempting to get a picture of him if I was able to flush him, but I was unsuccessful. Of course, I immediately knew it was something different when I saw the extremely long decurved bill, which to me was the outstanding thing about the bird.
7. Description of voice, if heard: Not heard.
8. Description of behavior: Flew slowly north about 3/4's of a mile and then lit in the North end of the Bays Branch sough area.
9. Habitat - general: Reeds, some water grasses, and water holes.
specific:
10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8. Explain:
I had not seen any similar species in this area heretofore, so all were eliminated.
11. Distance (how measured)? Estimated. 12. Optical equipment: Jason zoom binoculars & B&L zoom scope.
13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):
Sky was clear and sunny. The bird was flying from the southwest to northeast and then north. The sun was behind us to the southwest & he flew nearly over us then on north.
14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:
None
15. Other observers: Marilyn Burns, my wife.
16. Did the others agree with your identification? Yes.
17. Other observers who independently identified this bird: None.
18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:
Birds of North America by Robbins, Bertel, Bruun, and Zim. Peterson's Field Guide to Western Birds. They helped to confirm that it was an Ibis. I had to call Woody Brown and Pete Peterson and they both felt that it was a White-faced Ibis, rather than a Glossy Ibis.

Signature

Jane Burns

Address:

P.O.Box 32

Date: May 1, 1977

City, State:

Jamaica, Iowa 50128