

## DOCUMENTATION OF EXTRAORDINARY BIRD SIGHTING

**Species:** Pacific Loon; **Number:** 1 basic

**Location:** Hallett's Quarry, Story Co., Iowa

**Date:** 14 May 1999; **Time:** 4:20 to 4:40 p.m.

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

**Others before/with/after:** reported on Birdline; Russ Widner with me.

**Habitat and circumstances:** large quarry pond

**Description of bird:** Four loons were present (seen at one time). The Pacific Loon was smaller than two of the commons, but not seen side by side with them. It had light gray under parts and dark gray upper parts. The head was small and rounded with a straight, thin, relatively short bill compared to commons. The light gray of the face did not include the eye and continued as a straight line down the neck. The top of the head and nape appeared softer gray than the back, which had some flecks. Once the bird was seen head on and a thin chin strap was noted. Common Loons present included one in alternate plumage and two in basic plumage. One of the basic plumage birds was small (seen "playing" next to the alternate plumaged bird). It had a more elongated head and longer and thicker bill than the Pacific and had dark extending into the lower foreneck. If seen alone, it might have been confused with a Pacific.

**Voice:** not heard

**Similar species:** see above. The bird was not small enough for a Red-throated and did not hold the bill pointing up.

**Any one have reservations?:** no

**Light:** mostly back lighting; **Distance:** about 100 yards; **Optics:** zoom scope

**Previous experience:** have seen several in Iowa and many elsewhere

**References before/after viewing:** looked at National Geographic Guide while writing final description

**Time of notes:** during observation; **Final typing:** 2 days