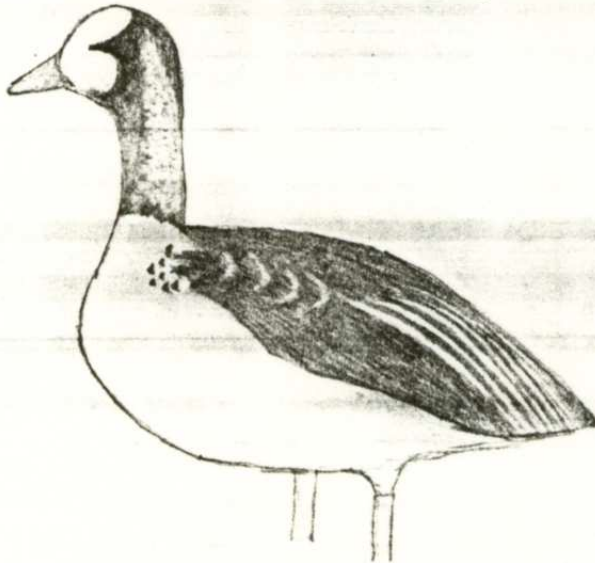


Sunday, noon
March 4, 1990
opposite W. Overlook campground, Coralville Lake
Johnson Co., IA

Twelve geese feeding at water's edge: 10 Greater White-fronted, 1 Ross' (1st Johnson Co. record), and the goose illustrated below. The unidentified goose was the size of the white-fronteds, dwarfing the Ross'. Neck length as in white-fronteds as were other bodily proportions. Bill pinkish, perhaps a hint of orangish. No "lips" could be seen at $\frac{1}{2}$ mile. "Face" extensively bright white, a larger white facial area than in white-fronteds. Remainder of head and neck darker and sharply demarcated from all-white underparts. Sides and back of neck paler, a sort of dirty white, patterned as illustrated. Upperparts plain medium brown except for a line of indistinct pale crescents over the shoulder and elongate tertiaries each with a white streak suggestive of a blue phase Snow Goose. Other remiges and rectrices could not be seen. Legs pink. None of the birds flew in the twenty minutes we observed them.



No vocalizations. Observed with Jim Fuller from about 700 yards under excellent lighting with 10 X 40 binoculars and a spotting scope. I have never seen a goose like this one in either captive collections or among hundreds of thousands of wild geese on the upper Texas coast where I grew up. My best guess at this point is a hybrid white phase/blue phase Snow Goose with aberrancy. I have observed many such hybrids on the upper Texas coast, typically with white heads and dark necks. The extensive dark on the hindcrown, cheek, and through the eye on this bird is unique in my experience. I suppose another possibility is a White-fronted/Snow Goose(blue phase) hybrid.

Ross' Goose-Size of Mallard. All snow-white plumage except for black primaries. Short neck. Round head. Distinctly abbreviated bluish-pink bill.

--Randy Pinkston