

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Snowy Egret How many? 3 (only one there next day)

Location? on southwest edge of Albion, Marshall County

Type of habitat? in flooded field/small marsh

When? date(s): 27 April 1984 (also 28 Apr) time: 6:15 p.m. to _____

Who? your name and address: Jim Dinsmore, Dept. Animal Ecology, Iowa State Univ

others with you: alone on 27th, with Steve Dinsmore and Eric Munson on 28th

others before or after you: Hank Zaletel, Joe Schaufenbuel, et al.

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

mid-sized egret, plumage all white. Three points stood out when I looked at the bird:

- At least one and perhaps all three of the birds had conspicuous long lacy plume feathers on the back.
- The legs of all three birds were black but the feet were yellow-this feature was specifically looked for and seen on all three birds
- The bill was straight, relatively thin, and dagger-like (color not noted). I have seen literally hundreds of Snowy Egrets and Little Blue Herons and thousands of Cattle Egrets in Florida. In my experience, the bill shape of the Snowy Egret is different from the thicker and slightly curved bill of the other two.

Similar species and how eliminated: leg/foot color eliminates Little Blue, Cattle and Great Egret. Also the size was much smaller than a Great Egret.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? no

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:
estimated 75 yards on 27th, ca 100 yards on 28th, lighting good with sun behind me on 27th, somewhat overcast on 28th, used 20 X spotting scope on 27th, 6-30 binocs on 28th

Previous experience with species and similar ones: see c above

References and persons consulted before writing description:

How long before field notes made? at time this form completed? 3 days later

MAIL TO: T. H. Kent, Field Reports Editor, 211 Richards Street, Iowa City IA 52240