

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

ROBINSON

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD.

1. Species Western Grebe 2. Number: 1

3. Location De Soto Bend National Wildlife Refuge Harrison County

4. Date: November 1, 1980 5. Time Bird seen: 3:30 PM to 4:00 PM

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):

Size: Slightly larger than the ducks with which it occurred.

Shape: The bird was grebe-like & had a long, slender neck, which it held straight up.

Color: Back was dark brown; most of the neck (excluding the rear of the neck) was white; the lower half of the face was white; upper half of the face and rear of the neck was brownish-black.

Bill: Coloration was a light brown; bill was straight & pointed.

7. Description of voice, if heard: not heard

8. Description of behavior: The bird rode low in the water. It dove underneath the water about once every 2 or 3 minutes. It kept itself separated from the other waterfowl on the lake.

9. Habitat - general: Oxbow lake, bordered by second-growth poplar stands
specific: it was seen in the open portion of the lake, where the water depth was about 5 to 10 feet.

10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8, Explain:

Common Loon -- Loons are much larger, have thicker necks, & hold their necks in a different posture.

Red-necked Grebe -- This species does not have a distinctly white neck.

11. Distance (how measured)? 160 yards
estimated by sight

12. Optical equipment:
Bushnell Spacemaster Scopes,
20x & Zoom 60x

13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you): Sun was in back of us and shone directly on the bird. Viewing conditions excellent.

14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species: when banding waterfowl with the Minn. Dept. of Natural Resources, I had the opportunity to see many Common Loons, Red-necked Grebes, Horned & Eared Grebes & several Western Grebes.

15. Other observers:
Bob Frederick & Rebecca Rogge

16. Did the others agree with your identification? yes

17. Other observers who independently identified this bird: none that I know of.

18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:

Golden Field Guide
Peterson's Field Guide (latest edition) } These supported the description which I have listed in Item 6 above.

19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? 2 days

John C Robinson Address: PO. Box 1015
Amea, Iowa 50010

Signature
Date: November 3, 1980 City, State: ↗