

late

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD.

1. Species Common Loon 2. Number: One

3. Location Cardinal Marsh, Winneshiek County, Iowa

4. Date: June 23, 1979 5. Time Bird seen: 1210 to 1220

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: large (about that of a snow goose); BILL: straight, heavy, black;
HEAD/NECK: dark green with a small white throat patch and partial white neck collar; BREAST/BELLY: white; BACK: dark, checkered with white spots
IN FLIGHT: hunchbacked with head and neck lowered, legs trailing out beyond tail, wings narrow and pointed

7. Description of voice, if heard: None

8. Description of behavior: First observed in flight as it flew overhead and circled marsh twice; then landed on water and started diving; later started preening

9. Habitat - general: flat to gently rolling farmland with wooded stream valley
specific: 200 acre marsh; good interspersions of cattails and open water.

10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8, Explain:
Yellow-billed Loon: bill was black not yellow

Other loons: observed bird was larger, big straight bill, green head and checkered back

11. Distance (how measured)? 100 ft to 200 yds (estimated) 12. Optical equipment: 7x35 binocs 25x scope

13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you): sun almost overhead; partly cloudy and somewhat hazy

14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species: have seen Common Loons in Iowa, Minn. & Wisconsin; only skins of Arctic & Red-throated Loons

15. Other observers: None

16. Did the others agree with your identification?
NA

17. Other observers who independently identified this bird:
None

18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:
None

9. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description?
1 1/2 months from notes taken at the time of sighting

Signature Darwin Koenig Address: RR4

Date: August 10, 1979 City, State: Decorah, Iowa 52101