

Common Eider  
26 Mar 1995  
Saylorville Res., Polk Co., IA  
\*A. Johnson  
IBL 65:71, 66:97

Record Number: 95-09  
Classification: NA

#### DOCUMENTATION

Ann Johnson, 532 120th Ave., Norwalk 50211

#### REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 65:71

Records Committee: IBL 66:97

VOTE: 1 A-E[ = A-O], 6 NA

NA, Probably was Common Eider, and very possibly the same one as previously seen at Red Rocks. However, I don't believe this documentation would stand on its own or would be considered adequate if another well-documented bird hadn't been seen recently. Observer states sloping head and elongated bill most obvious marks but doesn't go on to describe same.

NA, Important report because of the Red Rock bird but the information is not detailed enough to evaluate.

NA, Although I'm sure that the identification was right, the observation was from such a distance and there are too few details for this report to stand alone. This was quite possibly the Red Rock bird moving up river.

NA, The best thing in favor of this record is the observer's previous experience; however, the documentation was not done for 2 days and the viewing distance was not given. Objectively, the description seems fine for a female Canvasback. I am puzzled by the reports of what apparently was a single female eider at Saylorville on 26 March and at Red Rock on 7 April. I wouldn't expect a spring bird to backtrack.

A-E, Subspecies not recognizable from the documentation. This could be the same bird as 95-01 but not enough detail is given to tell if it is or not. Again origin of the bird is in question if we cannot tell if this is a bird that is kept in captivity in any numbers at all or if the subspecies is not known to be kept in captivity at all or in extremely small numbers in this part of the country.

NA, Details don't eliminate other eiders, female scoters.

NA, Rather brief description of what would be a significant observation for 2 reasons: (1) bird was with diving ducks during migration period (rather than Mallards as at RRR), (2) if indeed the Red Rock bird indicated movement as though wild bird. However I cannot concede ID as Common Eider from this description. Should be much longer than Lesser Scaup. Distance of observation?

95-09

**DOCUMENTATION FORM  
UNUSUAL BIRD SIGHTINGS IN IOWA**

**Species:** Common Eider (female)

**Location:** off Jester Park boat ramp, Saylorville Reservoir, Polk County, IA

**Habitat:** open water

**Date:** 26 March, 1995 **Time:** 16:55 to 17:00

**Name and Address:** Ann Johnson, 532 120th Avenue, Norwalk, IA 50211

**Other Observers:** None

**Description of bird:** The bird was with several Lesser Scaup and was a bit larger. It was all brown with no significant markings. The most distinctive part of the bird was its sloping forehead and elongated head. After it splashed and bathed for a couple of minutes, it flew low over the water away from me. I did not see the underside of the wing, but the upper side was all brown with no speculum nor any other markings.

**Similar species and how eliminated:** ID based solely on head profile which was identical to the Red Rock bird studied at length earlier in the year.

**Viewing conditions (light, distance, optics):** Looking east in afternoon sky, mostly overcast, through scope at approximately 35X.

**Previous experience:** Saw what is probably the same bird several times this winter at Lake Red Rock.

**References consulted during observation:** none

**References consulted before completing documentation:** Peterson Field Guide

**Field notes made:** Two days

**Documentation completed:** Two days